

Timeless Lessons from Rabbi Yochanan ben Zakkai and Practical Strategies for **Exam Success**

Shoshi Vorchheimer, Director of Teaching & Learning

As exam season approaches, many students are deep in revision. But alongside the focus on content and techniques, it's worth asking a deeper question: What does it truly mean to be a great student?

In Pirkei Avot (Ethics of the Fathers), Chapter 2, Mishna 8, Rabbi Yochanan ben Zakkai identifies the five greatest students he ever taught. These students each had a defining strength that contributed to their success-not just academically, but spiritually and morally. These qualities hold valuable lessons for how we approach learning today. Crucially, the Mishna also reminds us that greatness doesn't arise in a vacuum. Behind each student's success was a culture of learning, discipline, and curiosity-often supported by family, mentors, and community.

As Rachel Kolber, Head of Education Support, highlights in her Kesher article "How Can I Help My Child Prepare for SATs/Exams?", parents play a vital role in shaping learning attitudes. When families create an environment that values reading, questioning, and shared learning, children grow to see learning not just as a task-but as a way of life. Similarly, Sonia Slonim, Head of HASS, also contributed to Kesher with a forward-thinking guide on using AI tools to support revision and learning, helping students access resources,

בר תורה פרשת נשא

test their understanding, and personalise their study strategies.

Let's take a closer look at the five students of Rabbi Yochanan ben Zakkai, and match each of their strengths with a practical learning strategy that students—and parents—can apply today.

1. Rabbi Eliezer ben Hurkanos – "A plastered cistern that does not lose a drop"

Key trait: Perfect memory; retains everything he learns.

Strategy: Spaced repetition and active recall.

Learning isn't about last-minute cramming. Like Rabbi Eliezer, students benefit most when they revise regularly over time, test themselves, and build strong recall pathways.

2. Rabbi Yehoshua ben Chananya – "Happy is the woman who gave birth to him"

Key trait: Benefited from early and consistent exposure to learning.

Strategy: Build a home that values learning.

Great learners are often raised in homes where books are read, questions are welcomed, and curiosity is nurtured. Even today, students thrive when learning is visible and supported in their environment.

פרשת נשא **Shabbat Times**

Light candles 5:50pm Shabbat ends



3. Rabbi Yossi HaCohen – A pious man who goes beyond the letter of the law

Key trait: Goes above and beyond expectations.

Strategy: Deep engagement and ownership.

Instead of doing the bare minimum, strong students take initiative: refining their notes, seeking clarification, or exploring beyond what was assigned.

4. Rabbi Shimon ben Netanel – Fears sin and is strict with himself

Key trait: High standards and personal discipline.

Strategy: Self-monitoring and consistency.

Whether it's sticking to a study timetable or reaching out when help is needed, success often comes down to setting goals and holding oneself accountable.

5. Rabbi Elazar ben Arach – "Like a spring that ever gathers force"

Key trait: Broad-minded and innovative thinker.

Strategy: Analysis and creativity.

Strong students don't just memorise—they connect ideas, ask questions, and explore meaning. Tools like mind maps, practice essays, and concept-based study methods help deepen understanding.

Supporting Greatness at Home: Advice from Rachel Kolber

In her recent Kesher article, Rachel Kolber offered practical strategies for parents wanting to support their children's study habits. Her key suggestions are worth repeating and include:





- <u>Establish a study plan:</u> Create a visible planner to map out revision time weeks in advance.
- <u>Use the exam outline:</u> Encourage your child to make their own study notes using provided class materials—not AI or unreliable sources.
- <u>Create a positive environment:</u> A quiet, shared space near an adult is better than sending students to study alone in their rooms.
- Monitor progress: Check in regularly, offering guidance while encouraging independence.
- <u>Encourage balance:</u> Support your child's mental health with breaks, sleep, and perspective.

These ideas complement the lessons of Pirkei Avot: that excellence in learning comes from consistent effort, structure, values, and support.

Rabbi Yochanan ben Zakkai's students became great not only because of their talents but because they lived in environments that nurtured learning, curiosity, and moral integrity. As exams approach, let's take inspiration from our Mishnaic wisdom and understanding of neuroscience to support our students not just to succeed—but to grow as learners and people.

Year 11 Exams start on June 16.

SATs for Years 7 & 8 and Exams for Years 9 and 10 start on June 23.

Shabbat Shalom & Goodluck to our students!





The Yavneh Academy: Antisemitism & Survival Part 1

This past Wednesday evening, Rabbi Zach Gomo presented the first of three lectures on Antisemitism and survival. Zach relatively discussed the unknown experiences of Jews in Poland after the Second World War, including the infamous 1968 so-called 'Anti-Zionism' campaign. Next week he will be covering the incredible history of Jews in Yemen, amongst the oldest and longest lasting Jewish diasporas. Each lecture can be attended independently, yet overarching themes of Jewish resilience and pride in the face of adversity feature throughout - leaving the audience with important lessons to draw on for our own times. See you next week!







Finding Meaning in Repetition: The Deeper Message of Parashat Nasso We recall that when Bnei Visro

Rabbi Gedaliah Levin, Primary & Secondary Jewish Studies In my last Dvar Torah for Kesher I spoke about the repetition found in the Parshiyot of Vayakhel and Pekudei. It appears that the Torah is once again in repeat mode this week in Parashat Nasso. Nasso holds the honour of being the longest Parasha in the Torah- with an exhilarating 176 Pesukim. The thing is though, 66 of those Pesukim are almost a verbatim repetition of the gifts donated to the Mishkan by the Nesi'im, the leaders of each of the tribes. The same words are repeated again and again save for the day of Nisan and the name of the Nasi changingfor each paragraph. Again the question can be asked, why does the Torah need to repeat itself in this fashion?

Rav Shlomo Breur explains that the Torah is not listing the same gifts each time to simply show that each Nasi brought the same thing. On the contrary, the fact that each Nasi is named shows that each Nasi presented his gift in a unique way, in a manner that spiritually represented that particular Shevet.

This is alluded to by the usage of the word "- "this is" [the gift] which is mentioned at the end of each paragraph. When the Torah uses the words it implies a deep connection with the object or person being identified.

We recall that when Bnei Yisrael crossed the Yam Suf they proclaimed זה א-לי – "This is my G-d!", implying a clear, palpable recognition of the divine miracles they were experiencing.

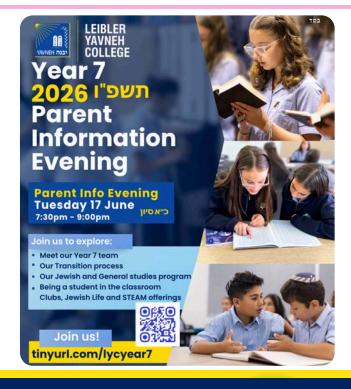
In the same vein each Nasi was able to channel a unique and individualised power for their own Shevet and infuse that energy into the very same metals, utensils and animals that all the other Nesiim were offering.

As we have just celebrated Shavuot, we can take this lesson to heart. Throughout our routine lives we might engage in the same Tefilot and Mitzvot as other Jews around the world. On the surface the actions and words might appear to be the same and repetitive. But if take a cue from the Nesiim, we learn that we can each put our own stamp on these holy rituals and make them our own.

Whether it is extra Kavana during Tefillah or performing a Mitzvah with a smile and enthusiasm, or learning more about the Mitzvah to better appreciate it, we can truly create a unique expression of holiness in Hashem's world.

Shabbat Shalom.





Yavneh ELC news

Winter Wonders

Charlene Orwin, Head of Yavneh Early Learning Centre

With the chill of winter greeting us every morning, it is timely to discuss the importance of outdoor play. During these cooler months, it is common for children to be restricted to indoor play at home, and only permitted to play outdoors when it is warm and sunny. Many parents fear that their children will not "like" being outside in the cold, or that they will get sick from being outside in the cold fresh air. For this reason, it is particularly important that young children enjoy outdoor activities in their early childhood education setting. Playing outside in winter presents its own unique opportunities for exploratio and learning. Therefore, outdoor play should be embraced in all types of weather, as it is crucial for children's ongoing development. At our ELC we are embracing the learning involved in seasonal changes, winter awareness, scientific elements and we are engaged in deep discussions around clothing changes, winter foods, nature changes and shorter days. All of our rooms are making the most of the rich learning that "Winter" has to offer.





For infants and toddlers the chance to experience the elements in the safe confines of warm clothes or snuggly blankets and beanies, enhances their connections with nature and the environment. Free movement for young children brings joy and stimulates a healthy appetite too! All this works towards supporting a strong sense of wellbeing. Younger children also need this freedom to move about, feel the cold air on their cheeks, and create body warmth through stimulating physical activity. Children should be given opportunities to enjoy the smells and visual changes in the environment. Children need to engage in experiences that connect them to their world.















All children need to play outside every day, even in Winter.
Going outside to run, jump, yell and wiggle gives children the chance to use their large muscles and work off extra energy.
Moving out into the fresh air is healthier for children than keeping them inside a closed building

where germs can spread easily.

Developmentally, playing outdoors has many benefits:

Physically: Playing outdoors in winter promotes physical development and well-being. This is because outdoor play encourages the use of the whole body by offering a safe space to run, jump, and exercise key muscle groups. Through activities such as riding tricycles and running, children increase their large muscle use. This increase in physical activity supports children's gross motor development and overall health. It is important that children remain active in the coole months so that they continue to build emerging skills that are crucial to their physical development.

Emotionally: Outdoor activities also promote emotional health benefits, such as self-confidence, and the ability to assess risks. By encouraging outdoor play in the winter, children learn to identify hazards, such as slippery surfaces, and moderate their behaviour to ensure their safety.

Socially: playing outdoors with others encourages social development and collaboration. This is because play teaches children how to work together in groups, which includes learning to share, negotiate, and solve conflict. Social outdoor play also provides children the opportunity to exercise and stretch their imaginations. In winter, the physical changes to the outdoor environment provide children with new opportunities for socio-dramatic play, and winter-themed games.

So here at the Yavneh ELC we enjoy getting on our Winter woollies and opening up a whole new winter wonderland for the children we care for!!







Yavneh ELC news

Cookies made from wheat flour!

JK Bet's Shivat Haminim Picnic

Talia Morris, Kinder Jewish Studies

In honour of Shavuot, JK Bet gathered on Friday last week and held a Shivat Haminim picnic, where each child had a literal taste of the Shivat Haminim! The Shivat Hamininm include olives, grapes, pomegranate, figs, dates, wheat and barley. Although some children only wanted to taste a few, once they saw their friends having a taste, they changed their minds and gave it a go! This demonstrates the importance of group activities and experiences, where everyone feels included and open to new ideas.



















Tasting delicious grapes!

















Ilana Glasman, Creche Room Leader

This week we started learning about all the amazing things cows provide us! We had a fun group activity painting our own cow out of a cardboard box, using black paint to create black spots. The children each took turns sticking a cow's patches onto a cow who had none, where we discussed all the dairy foods that come from cow's milk. We will continue to explore the different foods that come from cows and the brachot we say for them.









Primary MeWs

A Term of Leadership & Torah Learning in Year 6

Rabbi Gedaliah Levin, Primary & Secondary Jewish Studies

We are in the middle of a very busy term for Jewish studies in Year 6A. In Chumash students are studying the second half of Parashat Vayishlach which discusses the unfortunate saga of Dinah and Shechem, and Yaakov's return to the land of Canaan. Year 6 have shown their leadership during the various special days in the month of Iyar. They expertly performed the Flag Dance for Yom Ha'atzmaut both at school and at the ELC, and took part in activities for Lag B'Omer and Yom Yerushalayim. Students learned about the 70 names of Yerushalayim and each selected one to research and create a visually appealing and informative poster. A popular name choice was Ariel as three of the students in the class are named Ariel. Both Year 6 classes are advancing in their Gemara learning which began last term. Recently students took on the challenge of independently reading, translating and explaining a passage of Gemara which discusses the appropriate time for Davening Shacharit and what happens if one misses the correct time. Students are becoming accustomed to the flow of the Gemara which requires critical thinking and keeping track of the questions, answers, proofs and contradictions. My personal highlight of the classes is when a student asks me a thought-provoking question and I have to think deeply in order to answer it, and in some cases I need to research the question further before giving a clear answer. This exchange reminds students that we are all studying Torah together and we can all contribute to each other's understanding. I wish the Year 6s continued Hatzlacha in their Torah learning and Middot Tovot.



Mazal Tov to Our Year 1's!

Mazal Tov to our gorgeous Year 1 students who received their first Chumash just before Shavuot. Their Chumash concert was a culmination of many weeks of rehearsing, and the children delivered an awesome performance. Thank you to our Year 1 teachers for their tireless efforts in preparing the concert. After reciting Tehillim for the hostages and our soldiers in Israel, the students oozed confidence as they took turns speaking into the microphone, proudly reciting their lines. Their voices echoed through Lamm Hall with beautiful songs and actions, accompanied by Principal Morah Shula on the piano. Yasher Koach to each and every one of them for this incredible









































Primary MeWs

Travelling Through Time in the Jewish Studies Classroom

Ettie Spigelman, Primary Jewish Studies

This term, our Jewish Studies wall has transformed into a "Time Machine" that takes students on a journey through Jewish history—from the creation of the world to the present day, and beyond as we continue to wait for the coming of Mashiach.

After exploring the powerful message of מי יעלה בהר ה'—who may ascend the mountain of Hashem—we packed our metaphorical suitcases, put on our time-travelling hats, and stepped into the timeline of the Jewish people. Each stop along the way brings students face-to-face with key events and values that have shaped our identity, from Avraham Avinu to Matan Torah, from the Beit Hamikdash to the Galut, and all the way to modern times.

This interactive and visual journey invites students to see themselves as part of this ongoing story—active participants in our people's past, present, and future. The excitement of "travelling through time" not only brings history to life but also helps build a meaningful connection to our heritage and our hope for the days of Mashiach. Come and visit our hallway to see how learning comes alive, suitcase in hand





Year One's Days of Creation Gallery

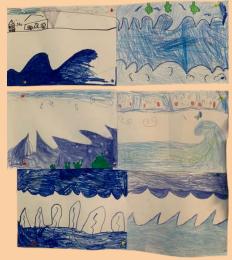
יום שלישי





Day 3 Hashem created the Earth and trees

יום שני



Day 2- Hashem created the שמיים.

In conjunction with Year One's Chumash Concert, the students created gorgeous artworks depicting the days of creation which they have begun learning in their Chumashim.



Day 1 - Hashem created Light



Day 6 - Hashem created animals & humans

Day 5 - Hashem created birds & fish

Day 4 - Hashem created the sun, moon & stars

Primary news

Year 2 Greek Salad Making

Last week, Year 2 made delicious Greek salad in preparation for Shavuot. Using fresh produce and yummy feta, hey practised their knife cutting skills and were very proud of

their tasty meal!















Online Safety with Year Six

Helen Krechman & Amanda Moss, Primary General Studies

Year Six has been learning about e-safety. We have discussed how safety online involves not disclosing passwords or personal information online and understanding the lasting impact of what we post on social media and in group chats. Last week we discussed strategies young people can you use if someone shares mean posts about them. Some of the strategies children suggested were collecting evidence, checking credentials of websites, not engaging with people you don't know personally, deleting the app and blocking the person.

Here are some of the students' thoughts:

If someone is posting a picture that I don't like, I would ask them to delete it and if they don't, I would tell my parents. Kerem

Someone was spamming me at 10:30pm and wouldn't stop, so I asked him to stop and deleted him from my contacts for a few days.

If I take a group photo, I will ask everyone's permission before posting and if someone said no, I wouldn't post it. Ella K

When someone posts a picture of a party that I wasn't invited to, I would feel excluded. People should be mindful of people's feelings before posting. Ella S

If my friends videoed me, I'd be really disappointed. I would tell my parents. I would

tell them to stop. My parents would also speak to their parents.

Tali E

I would feel sad because I could be made fun of for doing something that I like. I would first talk to them, to ask them to stop. If they don't, I would tell an adult. Daniel B

I would feel very upset that people did something without asking me and it would make me question their loyalty as friends. I would then report it to Kids Halpline.

Benji G











Wild Action Incurison

What do owls eat? How many toes does an echidna have? Year 1 students are diving into informative texts, sparked by a visit from Wild Action: The Zoo That Comes to You.

Reptiles, kangaroos, owls, echidnas and lizards came right into our school - bringing the wild side to writing.

Using The Writing Revolution, students are learning how to:

- write with structure and clarity
- identify the features of an informative text
- stay engaged through relevant, real-world content



Secondary J-Life Update:

Natan Fell, Education Support Secondary

Although this week was shortened due to Shavuot, it was as jam packed as ever. We had a lovely assembly on Friday in preparation for Shavuot where we heard from special guest Jake Jones and played a fun teacher vs student game to help get us into the Shavuot spirit. We then continued the festivities into lunchtime where we had an ice cream bar with a range of different toppings run by the year 12's. On Wednesday we had our Bar/Bat-me sessions in-which the boys were able to explore their connection to different types of Jewish learning whilst the girls learned about the traits of Miram and the timeless lessons we can learn from her.











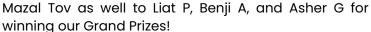
Torah Blitz Winners!

Tzviki Goldberg, Hesder

Last Friday at the Pre-Shavuot Assembly, we held the Grand Raffle for the Torah Blitz program!

A huge Yashar Koach to everyone who took part—over 450 raffle tickets were earned by more than 100 students who participated in the events over the two weeks!

Mazal Tov to Yaniv S, Asher G, and Eli M for placing in the Top 3 and receiving a Sefer with a personal note from the Tzevet.















Additionally, the top 10 students who earned the most raffle tickets—through their dedicated learning—were treated to a delicious pizza lunch this week as recognition for their incredible commitment.

Kol HaKavod to all who participated!

Secondary MeWs

Decoding the Past: Ancient Egyptian Symbols and Innovations

Sonia Slonim, Head of Humanities and Social Sciences

Last week, our students stepped back in time to explore the wonders of Ancient Egyptian innovation during our Ancient Egypt Invention Science Day. This hands-on event was a celebration of ancient ingenuity and offered students a chance to engage in a variety of experiential activities that brought history and science together in creative and meaningful ways.

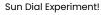
Students were immersed in the technologies of the past, trying their hands at making paper, weaving baskets, telling the time with a sundial—all essential tools in the daily life of ancient Egyptians. They even conducted a fascinating experiment comparing the effort of dragging bricks over dry vs. wet sand, recreating a technique believed to have been used in pyramid construction.

One highlight of the day was the comparison between ancient Egyptian papyri and the descriptions in Sefer Shemot (Book of Exodus), allowing students to make meaningful connections between Torah learning and historical evidence. They also explored the pros and cons of writing on copper versus clay, engaging in thoughtful evaluation of ancient communication methods.

A true standout moment came during a session with a forensic Egyptologist, who captivated the students with insights into the science of mummification and ancient burial practices. Through artefacts, replicas, and expert explanation, students gained a deeper understanding of how science helps decode the past.

































Connecting Generations
Last Friday, Year 7 A participated in a huge Mitzvah - visiting our senior community members before Shavuot! The smiles, conversations and dancing were a beautiful way to connect to

















Secondary news

Running with Zisser Term 2 Edition

Aaron Fetter, Head Of Sports (Secondary)

Back by popular demand, the third gathering of the YAV Run/Walk Club saw students descend on Caulfield Park bright and early, ready and raring to go. Students from year 7-12 limbered up in preparation for an 8km run or walk to school, with the sweet smell of accomplishment and a breakfast for champions awaiting them in Hamerkaz.

This initiative was launched late last year by our dedicated House Captains to promote Health and Wellbeing amongst students and staff at Yavneh. These events are linked to the global movement 'Running with Zisser', in memory of fallen IDF soldier Ilay Zisser z"I who loved the outdoors, and running with friends.











Secondary MeWs

Israeli Soccer Star Steals the Show

Aaron Fetter, Head of Sports (Secondary) & **Neerav Trivedi,** Secondary PE Teacher

After an almost 12-month wait, the Year 10 boys soccer team finally got their chance at redemption in this week's Maccabi Cup final rematch against Yeshiva College.

Caulfield Park on a bright winter's afternoon set the scene for the occasion but it was a surprise pregame appearance from an Israeli soccer star that stole the show. Fresh off scoring the title-winning goal for Melbourne City in last weekend's A-League Grand Final against arch rival Victory, Yonatan Cohen (pictured middle in pink) dropped in to wish both sides well before the blockbuster Jewish schools clash. The former Maccabi Tel Aviv attacking winger has called Melbourne home since September and has sat at Shabbat tables and in Shul with Yavneh families during his stint here.

Cohen's presence inspired the boys, who settled well and had the better of possession for most of the first half, despite a scrappy opening from both sides. Yavneh were unable to break the staunch Yeshivah last line, until Benji Lotzoff pounced on a rebound from a saved Zac Ash strike, firing the loose ball into the roof of the net to make it 1-0.













Yeshivah fought back and were able to get in behind the defence a couple of times but Eliram Ulianitsky's strong presence in goal made it tough for them to equalise as half time beckoned.

Yeshivah began the second half stronger and their persistence paid off with a smart passage of paly resulting in the leveling goal. Yavneh were under pressure throughout the second half, but some strong efforts from the defence and Eliram prevented any further damage on the scoreboard.

It was 1–1 at full time and the referee decided on five minutes of extra time before penalties, to Mr Trivedi's total bemusement. The lengthy extra time couldn't split the sides so it was onto penalties! Suspense set in over a frosty Caulfield Park surface, as both sides readied themselves to step up to the penalty spot. Unfortunately, Yavneh missed the first two and never recovered as Yeshivah held their nerve to win the shootout 3–1.

The Yavneh PE Department thanks Martin Jona, Maccabi Victoria Pathway Program Co-ordinator and Mark Rogers from Yeshiva for their support of this successful Interschool Sport event.

Community MeWs



LEIBLER YAVNEH COLLEGE PRIMARY & SECONDARY

Music Soirée

Upcoming Dates 2025:

JUNF:

Monday 9: Kings Birthday (College closed - ELC early closure lpm)

JULY:

Friday 4: Last day of Term 2.

Sunday 13: Fast day - 17th Tammuz Tuesday 22: First day of Term 3.

Mazal Tovs

Mazal Tov to **Taryn** and **David (Duvi) Feldman** on the birth of a baby boy and brother to Benjamin. Welcome Raphael Jesse (רפאל ישי)

TUESDAY JUNE 10th

TOVA HERSZBERG PERFORMANCE CENTRE 7:00pm to 8:30pm

For solo performers & small groups





Blossom with Brachot!

Thursday 26 June 9:15am ל' סיון

Step inside our warm ELC. Enjoy hands-on Brachot fun, meet our educators, and see Jewish learning come to life!







Community MeWs



3,214 PUSH-UPS 4-26 JUNE 2025.

Join The Push-Up Challenge and help raise awareness for better mental health for all Australians.

Take on 3,214 push-ups over 23 days, representing the 3,214 lives lost to suicide in Australia in 2023.



Download the app and register!



Push For Better

Team Name: Yavneh

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יבנה YAVNEH	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Period 0	Gemara Club		Gemara Club		Gemara Club
RECESS		Halacha Club	Halacha Club	Halacha Club	
LUNCH	Torah for the Table- Y7-9	Ketuvim - Y10-12 What If? Y7-9	Machshava on the Parsha - Y10-12 J-VR: Y7-9	Practical Halacha in the modern world - Y10-12	The Jewish Week That Was - all years

