



# קשר KESHER

פרשת ראה

Friday 7 August 2026  
כ"ד באב תשפ"ו

## Raising Readers, Raising Writers.

**Shoshi Vorchheimer**, *Director of Teaching and Learning*

Every Tuesday lunchtime, a group of students gathers for Book Club. There are no assessments, no compulsory tasks and no marks attached. Instead, students come together simply to talk about books: the stories that have captivated them, the characters they can't stop thinking about, the ideas that challenged them and the books they think someone else simply has to read next.

Watching these conversations unfold is a reminder that reading is contagious. One student's enthusiasm sparks another's curiosity. A recommendation becomes the next novel someone borrows. A discussion about a character turns into a conversation about history, ethics, psychology or current events. Reading, at its best, becomes a community.

This term, we are delighted to further nurture that culture of reading through Melbourne Jewish Book Week, welcoming acclaimed authors Anna Ciddor and Erica Frydenberg to the College. Their visits provide students with the unique opportunity to engage directly with accomplished writers, hear about the craft of storytelling and explore the ideas behind their work. Experiences like these remind students that books are living conversations, connecting us with new perspectives, histories and possibilities.

Over the past few weeks, I have also been meeting individually with our VCE students to discuss their academic progress. In almost every meeting, one pattern has become increasingly clear.

There is a noticeable difference between the writing of students who read widely and those who do not.

The difference is not simply vocabulary, although that certainly plays a part. Students who read regularly tend to write with greater precision and fluency. Their language is richer without being forced. Their sentences are more controlled.

פרשת ראה

Shabbat Times



Light candles 5:19pm

Shabbat ends 6:16pm

Goldschlager Family School of Jewish Studies  
Leopold and Isabella Abrahamovits  
Yavneh Primary School  
A.S. Leibler Secondary School  
P +61 3 9528 4911

Abeles Liberman Pre-School incorporating  
The Gillian and Colin Mandel Family  
Yavneh Creche  
81 Balaclava Road, Caulfield VIC 3161  
P +613 8317 2510



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## ***Raising Readers, Raising Writers, continued ...***

Their ideas are more nuanced. They express themselves with clarity, sophistication and confidence. They possess the breadth of knowledge and cultural awareness that allows them to make insightful connections across texts, history and contemporary issues.

These are precisely the qualities rewarded in VCE. Students often assume that excellent writing can be left until Year 12 to develop. Parents sometimes hope that with enough discipline and preparation on the teacher's part, a student's writing will suddenly become sophisticated.

The reality is rather different.

Strong writing is not built overnight. It is the product of thousands of hours spent absorbing language, encountering new ideas and seeing how skilled writers communicate. Every novel, biography, newspaper article or piece of quality non-fiction quietly adds another layer to a student's understanding of language and the world.

Reading develops far more than literacy. It expands vocabulary without rote learning. It improves spelling without endless drills. It strengthens sentence structure, develops empathy, broadens general knowledge and gives students a reservoir of examples and ideas to draw upon when they write.

Importantly, it also develops curiosity. The strongest VCE students are rarely those whose knowledge begins and ends with the classroom. They are interested in the world. They read beyond the set texts. They ask questions. They pursue ideas. They make connections.

As educators, we can encourage this habit at school. We can recommend books, establish clubs and create opportunities for discussion. However, VCE doesn't simply assess what students have learned in Year 12; it rewards the habits of mind they have been developing for years.

Undoubtedly, the most powerful influence begins at home. Children notice what adults value. If books are visible in the home, if conversations include "I'm reading a fantastic book at the moment," if they regularly see a parent reading for pleasure rather than scrolling a phone, they learn that reading is simply part of life.

It is difficult to convince a child that reading matters if they never see the adults around them doing it.

This is not about asking every family to become literary critics. It is about creating a culture where reading is normal, enjoyable and valued. Whether it is ten minutes before bed, sharing recommendations around the dinner table, visiting the local library together, or reading the weekend paper on a shabbat morning, these small habits accumulate over time.

Literacy is not built in English lessons alone. It is built through the quiet moments spent turning pages, in discussion on couches, at shabbat tables, and over coffee.

If we want our children to become thoughtful writers, articulate communicators and lifelong learners, then perhaps the greatest gift we can give them is not simply encouraging them to read, but showing them that we do too.



### **Book recommendations from Book Club:**

- 'Everything is Tuberculosis, the history and persistence of our deadliest infection' by John Green (who knew the author of the young adult, romance, 'The Fault in our Stars' would write a non-fiction book about a disease!?)

- National Graphic, particularly the article on landslides- "Lessons of a Landslide Detective", June 2026. (Not to be listened to necessarily with 'Landslide' by Fleetwood Mac... though highly recommended.)



## Parashat Re'eh: Learning to See the Land

**Zachary Gomo**, *Head of Education Support Secondary*

Parashat Re'eh opens with the words:

"Re'eh anochi noten lifneichem hayom berachah u'klalah" —

"See, I set before you this day a blessing and a curse"

(Devarim 11:26).

The Parsha does not begin with the word "Choose," but with Re'eh—"See." Before we can make wise choices or shape the future, we must first learn to see reality clearly.

At the start of the First World War, Eretz Yisrael was ruled by the Ottoman Empire. The Jewish population began suffering acutely as the war began, including from disease and mass hunger. In 1915, conditions became even worse when a massive locust invasion destroyed crops, fields and trees.

The Ottoman commander Djemal Pasha appointed Aaron Aaronsohn, a well-known Jewish agronomist from Zikhron Ya'akov, to help fight the plague.

Aaronsohn's work required a deep knowledge of the land. He studied its soil, crops, water sources and geography. He understood where the locusts were breeding, which fields might still be saved and how supplies could be moved from one region to another.

He did not see Eretz Yisrael as a collection of separate towns and settlements. He saw one connected landscape.

That ability to see the whole country as a single map later became extremely valuable when Aaronsohn helped establish NILI, a Jewish intelligence network that assisted Britain in its struggle against the Ottoman Empire.

The name NILI came from the words:

"Netzach Yisrael lo yeshaker" —

"The Eternal One of Israel will not lie"

(Shmuel I 15:29).

NILI's members gathered information about Ottoman troops, roads, railway lines, military positions and water sources.

Aaronsohn's knowledge of the land helped the network understand how these different elements were connected.

For Aaron Aaronsohn, knowledge of the land was not merely scientific. It was also an expression of love. To understand where water flowed, where crops could grow and how regions were linked was to imagine how a future Jewish homeland might be cultivated, protected and renewed.

But vision requires more than knowledge. It also requires courage.

Aaron's sister, Sarah Aaronsohn, shared his commitment to the future of the Jewish people in Eretz Yisrael. While Aaron worked outside the country to maintain contact with the British, Sarah became one of NILI's main leaders in the land itself.

When the network was discovered in 1917, Sarah was arrested and tortured. She refused to reveal NILI's secrets or betray its members. Despite days of suffering and the loss of her own life, she did not break.

Aaron and Sarah represented two forms of the same vision. Aaron understood the physical landscape—its fields, roads and water sources. Sarah understood that building a future for the Jewish people in that land would also require courage, loyalty and sacrifice.

This is one of the lessons of Re'eh. To see Eretz Yisrael is not simply to admire its beauty. It is to learn its history, understand its landscape, care for its people and recognise the possibilities within it.

The members of NILI saw the land not only as it was, but as it might one day become.

The blessing and the curse were both before them. The land could remain a place of hunger, danger and foreign rule, or it could become a place of renewal and Jewish life. Their task was first to see clearly—and then to act.

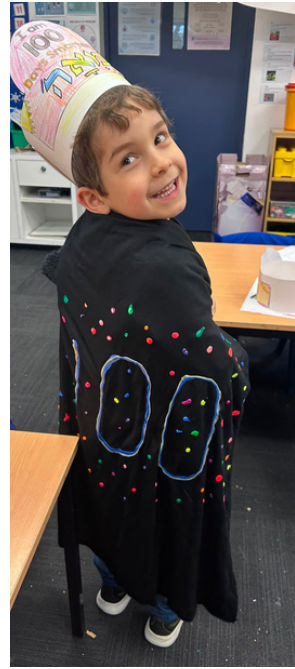


## 100 Days in Prep

**Loren Pamensky**, Primary General Studies Teacher

This Last week our Prep children celebrated 100 days in Prep. 100 days of exploring, playing, davening, growing and learning at school. Our Preps have made us very proud of what they have achieved in Literacy, Numeracy, Jewish Studies, Hebrew, and emotional growth. Everyone looked fabulous in their 100 costumes and accessories! We spent the day engaged in Literacy and Numeracy activities about the numbers up to and including 100. We made crowns to celebrate our 100 days of learning and prepared fairy bread for our morning tea. During Jewish Studies we discussed the concept of 613 mitzvot in the Torah and listed the many mitzvot we know, adding up to nearly 100! We worked out the Hebrew letter numerical value of numbers 1-100.

Prep Teachers,  
Nicky Kapul, Loren Pamensky, Morah Sue and Morah Chavi



## Senior Kindergarten Visit a Year 5 Jewish Studies lesson.

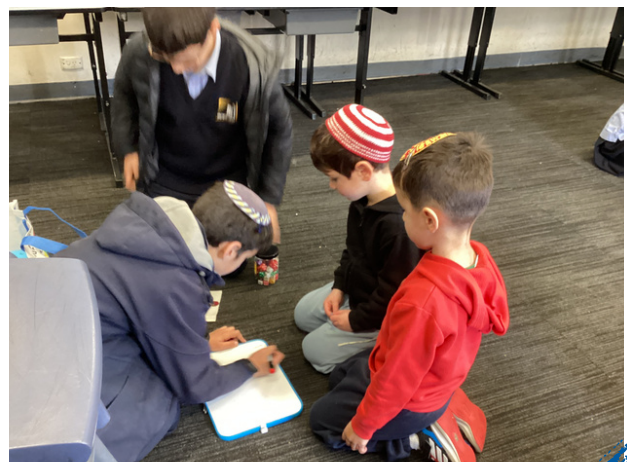
**Haya Epstein**, *Primary Jewish Studies*

Our Year 5 students recently welcomed our Senior Kindergarten visitors during our Jewish Studies lesson. The session gave the younger students an opportunity to experience a Year 5 classroom while they are learning about "occupations/ careers". Today they learnt about the role of a teacher.

Year 5 students took on the role of teachers by reading stories, guiding simple learning activities, and then enjoyed games that the year 5 students had prepared especially for the kinder class.

They supported their younger peers with patience, kindness, and encouragement. This hands-on experience helped the Senior Kindergarten students build confidence and familiarity with school, while providing the Year 5 students with the opportunity to develop their leadership, communication, and mentoring skills.

It was wonderful to see students from both year levels learning together, building positive relationships, and enjoying a meaningful learning experience.



## Year 3 English – Bringing Trolls to Life!

**Romy Browne and Leigh Roncon**, *Primary General Studies*

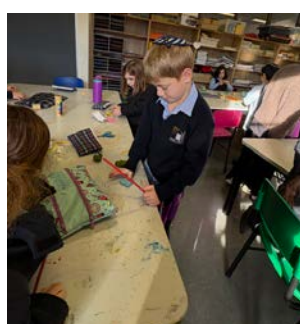
Our Year 3 students have begun an exciting new writing unit focusing on narrative writing. This term, we are using the Talk for Writing framework to learn how authors create memorable and believable characters.

Our model text is *The Stone Trolls*, an old Scandinavian folktale. To immerse ourselves in the world of the story, students began by brainstorming everything they already knew about trolls and researching how trolls are portrayed in different books, films and other media.

Using their newfound knowledge and plenty of imagination, each student then created their own troll out of plasticine. Once their troll was complete, they wrote a descriptive character profile, thinking carefully about what their troll looked like, how it moved, and what its wants and fears might be.

It was wonderful to see the students' creativity shine through. Every troll had its own unique personality, and the plasticine creations were both imaginative and incredibly cute!

We look forward to seeing how students use descriptive language to create colourful characters in their narrative writing later this term.



## Melbourne Jewish Book Week comes to JLife Primary

**Sara Amzalak**, Head of Jewish Life and Learning

This week, JLife Primary joined Melbourne Jewish Book Week by welcoming Melbourne born author Rochel Burstyn. Rochel ran an interactive workshop for both Years Two and Three. Students heard how she became interested in becoming an author, participated in activities that demonstrated how she thought of the topics and ideas for many of her stories and asked many good questions about publishing books. Rochel imparted two very important messages to students, never give up – keep trying and the more you work at something – the better you get. Some students were also keen to get her autograph. An informative and fun time was had by all.

Also, in conjunction with MJBW, at our JLife Craft Club on Monday, students from Years One to Three came and decorated wooden bookmarks with their Hebrew names, with some making them for an Abba and Ima as well. The results were beautiful.



**C CARE** 

HELP US SWEETEN THE NEW YEAR FOR OUR COMMUNITY!

Please bring in a jar of Kosher Honey by  
**Tuesday, 1<sup>st</sup> September**

Honey will be distributed to vulnerable members of our community through C Care in their 'Rosh Hashanah gift bags', ensuring that everyone in our community has the opportunity to celebrate the Jewish New Year.

C Care supports individuals and families experiencing food insecurity and social isolation through personalised, dignified food relief and meaningful connection programs.



## Yavneh Academy Continues to Grow



**The Yavneh Academy**  
תלמידינו וחכמיה

**Fortnightly Laflaf Sessions**

A parsha focus that is personal and meaningful

**Join us Friday mornings!**

-  **Fridays, fortnightly**  
Starting 14 Aug  
Through to end of Term 3 (18 Sept)
-  **8:20-9:00am**
-  **VCE Study Centre**  
Yavneh Elsternwick Campus
-  **Coffee & cake provided**

**Join the Yavneh Academy WhatsApp group**

We'll run a weekly poll there. Sessions run only if a minimum of 5 people sign up.



**Chaim Cowen**, Deputy Principal, Head of Jewish Studies

The Yavneh Academy has gone from strength to strength this term, with an outstanding launch featuring our Scholars in Residence, Rabbi Dr Levi Cooper and Mrs Sara Cooper. Rabbi Dr Cooper's first two sessions captivated community members with thought-provoking Torah learning, engaging discussion and practical insights, setting a wonderful tone for the Academy's continued growth.

We are now excited to continue with our fortnightly Laflaf sessions. Based on the Lifnai v'Lifnim approach employed at Yavneh, Laflaf invites participants to engage with the weekly parashah in a way that is intellectually rich, deeply personal and genuinely meaningful. This unique methodology has transformed Torah learning for our students, and it has been equally embraced by the adults who have joined us.

Whether you are looking to deepen your understanding of the weekly parashah, reconnect with Torah learning, or simply begin your Friday with inspiration, these sessions offer a welcoming and enriching environment for all.

We warmly invite parents, alumni and members of the wider community to join us as we continue building a vibrant culture of lifelong Torah learning through the Yavneh Academy. We look forward to learning with you.

Sign up via the QR code in the Yavneh Academy flyer!

## A Week to Remember with Our Scholars in Residence

**Chaim Cowen**, Deputy Principal, Head of Jewish Studies

Over the past week and a half we have been privileged to welcome Rabbi Dr Levi Cooper and Mrs Sara Cooper as our Scholars in Residence. From Tuesday through to Monday, they inspired our school community with meaningful learning and genuine connection.

Across the week, they worked with students from Years 6-12, led a memorable and uplifting Year 12 Tish at the Ben David family's home, presented two engaging parent learning sessions, and spent valuable time with our staff. Their warmth, wisdom and passion for Torah left a lasting impression on everyone they met.

We are deeply grateful to our anonymous donors for making this special opportunity possible, and we thank Rabbi Dr Levi and Mrs Sara Cooper for an unforgettable week of learning and inspiration.



## One Minute of Mayhem

**Morgan Levick**, *Head of Mathematics*

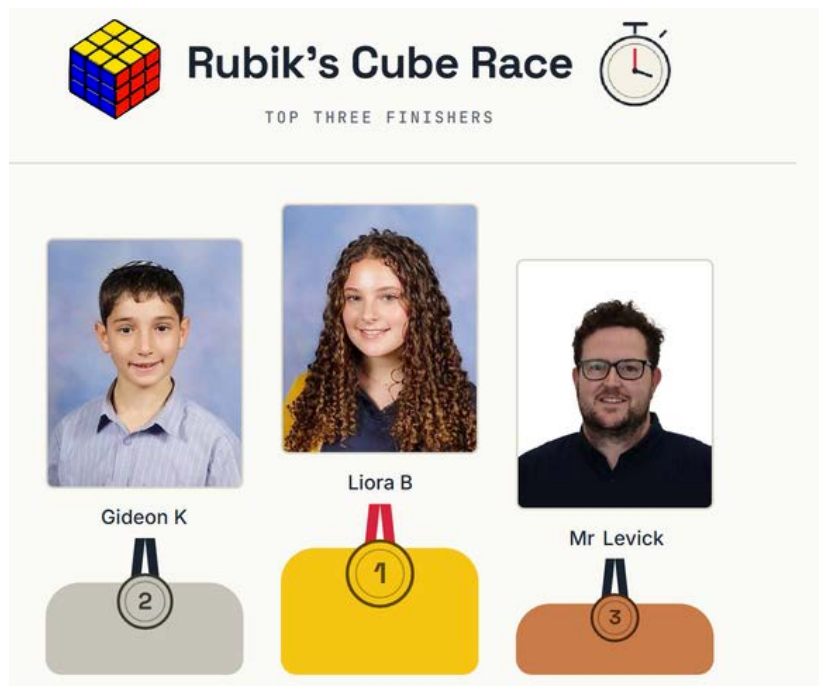
It was a cold Friday morning, like many others this winter, but there was something different in the air. Before assembly had even begun, students were already asking, "Are we still racing, Mr Levick? Can I bring my own cube?"

Assembly started with a beautiful Dvar Torah from Meital W, and then we were inspired and enlightened by our scholars in residence. Next was Mr Solomon spruiking the amazing lunch-time events which will take place during National Science (Aug 17-21), then Mr Fetter caught us up on the latest in Yavneh sporting news. A quick word about Jewish Interscholar Battle of the Bands, and then it was time for the main event – what everyone had been waiting for, what students had been asking me about all week, what many were calling "the most exciting thing to ever happen to the Yavneh cubing community".

The inaugural Yavneh Speed Cubing Competition saw students, and myself, race to solve a 3x3 Rubik's cube in front of the entire secondary school. Volunteers were asked to come down to the stage to show off their skills. Some brought their own Rubik's cube, others borrowed one of mine, and we squared off in a contest so fierce you'd think the winner was taking home a million dollars instead of a \$10 tuckshop voucher.

We had experienced cubers, like Nathan S, who knows some advanced solving techniques. We also had students new to cubing, like Kayla E, who is already remarkably fast.

Raphael, the assembly MC, set us off with a 3-2-1 count, and the chaos began. The audience went wild, the cubers began spinning, and in a motion-blur of colours it all ended in less than a minute. Raph announced the winner: Liora B, and barely a moment after her came Gideon K. I managed to finish third—a respectable result and, if I'm honest, much higher than I had expected considering that cubing is widely regarded as a young man's game (the current world record holders are 10 and 12 years old!).



Liora received a tuckshop voucher as the grand prize (value: \$10), and Gideon walks away with the satisfaction that he beat me in a game I've been playing since before he was born (value: priceless).

As we were leaving assembly, I overheard one competitor say "I was so nervous I had beads of sweat dripping down my forehead." Another said "I'm going to win the next one!"

Every cuber did an outstanding job. Solving a Rubik's cube at all is an impressive achievement; solving one at speed is even more remarkable.

Any student who would like to learn can come along to Maths Club each Thursday lunchtime in the Resource Centre. Rubik's Cubes and printed solution guides are also available there throughout the week. Happy cubing!



## Syn Radio stars!

**Samuel Brygel**, Head Of Humanities and Social Sciences

Building on the skills and training they received on City Week, each Tuesday of Term 3 a rotating group of Year 9s will be attending the Syn Radio studio at RMIT University. Preparing the topics and music of their show in advance, the students have the wonderful opportunity to stage their own radio show. Tune in to 90.7FM to hear our students live!



## YAVNEH MUSIC

**TERM 3**

**AUG 11** THE COUNTS GIG '26

**AUG 31** SCOPUS BATTLE OF THE BANDS

**TERM 4**

**OCT 20** SEM' 2 - INST' MUSIC SOIREE

**NOV 22** YR 12 GRADUATION

**DEC 3** SPEECH NIGHT

**DEC 10** YR 6 GRADUATION

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## Upcoming Dates 2026

### August:

Monday 17 – ZFA Conference – Student Free Day

### Mazal Tov

To **Gabriel Bacher** and family on his Barmitzvah.

To **Victoria and Yedidya Simson** on the birth of a baby girl.  
Sister to Raph and Beau (SKG)

### Condolences

To **Noah and Maya Kolieb** on the passing of their Grandfather.

To the **Spivak family** on the sad passing of their uncle Rudy Spivak a"h.

**The 45th Junior Carnival**  
**SYDNEY** | 12 - 19 January 2027  
**WA NSW VIC QLD ISR**  
**UNITED THROUGH SPORT**

Maccabi Junior Sports Carnival is one huge week of sport, social events and new friendships, bringing together Jewish teens in Years 7-10 from across Australia and Israel for an experience like no other.

Carni welcomes everyone, including neurodivergent young people and young people with disability.

Interested in All Abilities at Carni?  
Email [teamvic@maccabijuniorsports.com.au](mailto:teamvic@maccabijuniorsports.com.au)

**Registrations Now Open**

**Early Bird Discount**

Scan the QR code to register today

or visit the URL below: [bit.ly/RegisterCarni2027](https://bit.ly/RegisterCarni2027)

**FINDING LIGHT:**  
**AN EVENING WITH CHANI LISBON**  
Inspiring story of resilience, hope and the healing power of humour

**DATE & TIME**  
Wednesday 12 August 2026  
7:45pm arrival, 8:00pm start

**TICKET PRICE**  
\$36 Per Person  
\$50 Per Couple

Melbourne location to be advised

**CLICK HERE TO BOOK TODAY!**

**ABOUT CHANI LISBON**  
Chani Lisbon is a stand-up comedian and motivational speaker known for her raw, comedic and inspiring storytelling. Growing up as one of 11 children in a strict Orthodox Jewish family in Los Angeles, Chani's journey includes profound personal challenges, including alcohol addiction. Today she uses humour, honesty and vulnerability to inspire audiences with a message of resilience, hope and healing.

**Rosh Hashana Boxes 5787/2026**

**What's in the box?**

Emunah provides a range of life-changing programs that support Israel's most vulnerable children, women and families helping them break cycles of dysfunction and build stable, fulfilling lives.

Please share your Mazal Tovs with us! – [marketing@yavneh.vic.edu.au](mailto:marketing@yavneh.vic.edu.au)