

Bar/Bat Mitzvah Monthly Activity



We Are the People of the Book

The Jewish people are called “The People of the Book.” While this refers to our connection to the Torah and then to the many sacred books that follow it, our culture has evolved as one that deeply appreciates learning and reading. This month, please choose a book from the library (either at TRS or your public library) that has a Jewish theme or is about Jewish responsibility, maturity or experiences. A suggested book list follows. Read it during the course of this month and then answer and discuss these questions. Consider doing this with your partner (if you are in a double ceremony) or with another friend who is also going through Bar/Bat Mitzvah preparation.

1. What was the main idea of the book?
2. Did you feel a Jewish connection to the book or the characters in it?
3. What did the book make you think about in terms of your Judaism?
4. Did you learn something new by reading this book?

Suggested books:

A Pickpocket’s Tale by Karen Schwabach
About the B’nai Bagels by E. L. Konigsburg
Beyond Courage: the Untold Story of Jewish Resistance During the Holocaust by Doreen Rappaport
Brooklyn Bridge by Karen Hesse
Duel by David Grossman
Hereville: How Mirka Got Her Sword by Barry Deutsch
His Name is Raoul Wallenberg by Louise Borden
Julia’s Kitchen by Brenda Ferber
Lily’s Crossing by Patricia Reilly Giff
Music Was It: Young Leonard Bernstein by Susan Goldman Rubin
Number the Stars by Lois Lowry
Stealing Home by Ellen Schwartz
The Berlin Boxing Club by Robert Sharenow
The Book Thief by Markus Zusak
The Chosen by Chaim Potok
The Devil’s Arithmetic by Jane Yolen
The Diary of a Young Girl by Anne Frank
The Hebrew Kid and the Apache Maiden by Robert Avrech
The King of Mulberry Street by Donna Jo Napoli
The Other Half of Life by Kim Whitney
The Path of Names by Ari Goelman
The Silver Cup by Constance Leeds



Monthly Service Attendance



MACHBERET T'FILLAH: SERVICE JOURNAL *6 Months Before the Bar/Bat Mitzvah*

Attend a Shabbat morning service at either TRS or another synagogue. Pay special attention to whether the Torah is read or chanted. If it is chanted, what was the chanting like? Did you recognize it? Were some of the prayers chanted by the Bar/Bat Mitzvah? Do you know some of these chants? Why are the V'ahavtah and the Torah similar in their melody? Do you think that chanting the portion is easier or harder? As you begin learning the trope, or special marks that tell us how to chant the Torah, can you pick out the marks that you've already learned when you listen to someone else chant the Torah? Can you follow along in the Torah commentary at your seat?