

placed in display holders. This makes the covers clearly visible (see photo).

Since most of today's juvenile books have attractive covers, we shelve all juvenile books in eight custom-built, wooden picture-book bins arranged along both sides of a cabinet. By placing books sideways in these units, young patrons view the front cover of each book—instead of only the spine as in traditional shelving. The bin arrangement also facilitates quicker shelving and provides for a neater, as well as a more attractive library environment. The bins are on wheels and can be easily relocated for collection rearrangement. In short, a high degree of flexibility has been achieved by using picture-book shelving for older children's books, as well as for picture-books.

Storytelling for Younger Children

To acquaint youngsters with Jewish children's literature and to directly involve them, a creative storytelling technique is used. As an example, we have always given children a small piece of *challah* at the conclusion of the reading of *Bemblem's Bakery*. We try to find stories with repetitive words or phrases. These are particularly well suited for storytelling use, as youngsters can be "prompted" to repeat the phrase at a specific point. This is a technique that encourages attentiveness, and helps children to "enter" the story.

Challenging Older Children

This past year, the staff of the local Jewish Community Center let it be known that they would be running a city-wide Academic Challenge for Jewish Book Month. Our idea was to start the Academic Challenge earlier in our own school—at the very start of the school year, to be exact. Our goal was to pique student reading interest for a period longer than just the few weeks prior to Jewish Book Month, when the event was to culminate. Each student in our religious school received information about the Academic Challenge, and the reading-list of about twenty books from which the questions in the Challenge were drawn. During class visits, the idea of the Academic Challenge was reinforced by providing brief highlights of the books on the list. This encouraged the students to achieve the six-book minimum reading requirement necessary for participation in the JCC city-wide Academic Challenge.

The actual JCC Academic Challenge event involved teams of eight students. Each team was grade-related, but team members were drawn from several congregations. Questions were sufficiently specific that one had to have read the book to respond correctly.

Prizes were given to all members of the winning team. Students on the remaining teams were given certificates of participation.

The JCC Challenge attracted a large number of students. All twenty titles were read by some of the children. The contest served to familiarize youngsters who themselves may have read only six books with a broad cross-section of Jewish literature. Even those youngsters who did not participate in the contest had a chance to be exposed to Jewish literature and to experience the excitement generated by Jewish literature.

Dr. Ralph R. Simon is the Librarian of the Sindell Library, Temple Emanu-El, University Heights, Ohio. He is also Vice President for Publications of the Association of Jewish Libraries.

Editor's Note:

Comparing a "Hot" with a "Cool" Medium

Marcia W. Posner

It would be interesting to have the older children compare the same fiction title in two media, using Berman's outline for writing a book report for a work of fiction (see below).

The book is a "hot" medium because it demands reader involvement and understanding in order to reach the reader—in other words, in order to exist for that reader. A film, filmstrip, or videotape that is played is there, whether or not the viewer participates (unless the viewer shuts his eyes and stuffs his ears); thus it is a "cool" medium.

Books and films treat stories and characters differently. Students might list what a book does better than film medium, and what film does better than the printed page.

Dr. Marcia W. Posner, co-editor of Judaica Librarianship, did her doctoral studies at New York University in the field of Communication Technology in Education.

Read a Book; Do a Mitzvah

Lillian N. Schwartz

*Temple Emanu-El
Providence, RI*

The Temple Emanu-El Library, in conjunction with its religious school, created a reading incentive program for Jewish Book Month called "Climb the Double Mitzvah Ladder." The "double mitzvah" consists of (1) reading a Jewish book, and (2) contributing to another's welfare through the Jewish Braille Institute.

An oversized poster of a ladder was drawn and hung in the library. As each student presented a written report of a book read from our library, his/her name was added to a step, beginning from the bottom step. At step three, a donation was made in honor of that student to the Jewish Braille Institute of America. At the top of the ladder, step seven, another gift was made to the Braille Institute, and a bookplate (figure 1) was placed in a book in our children's collection honoring that student. (Donations to the Jewish Braille Institute in honor of students were made through the Temple's Men's Club.)

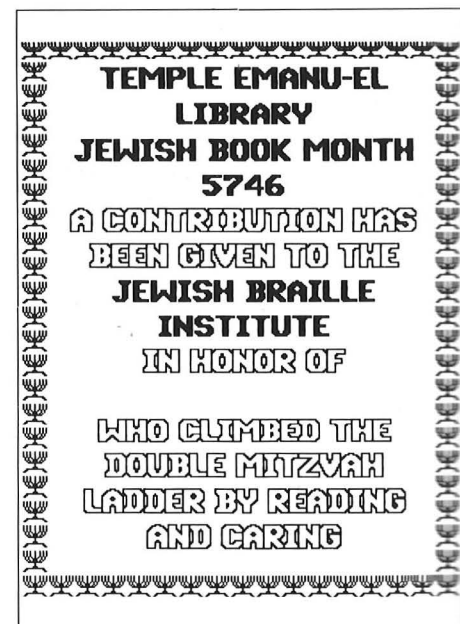


Figure 1. Bookplate honoring students who have read seven books.

From the outset, we tried to help the children understand that one can live productively without sight. Classes in the library discussed blindness, and a demonstration was conducted on a Braille typewriter with the assistance of an adult volunteer. She presented each student with his/her name in Braille on a book mark. The Braille Institute supplied us with a page from Genesis in Braille, and we read together from our Bibles, tracing the letters as a blind person would do.

At the Hanukkah assembly, seven students were presented laminated certificates—enlarged duplicates of the bookplates especially designed for this program by Minna Ellison, a teacher. Thirteen more students who had climbed to the third step were applauded for their worthy accomplishment. Half of our student body was involved in at least a part of the program, and the step-ladder was filled with names.

In past years, the Temple library had created other reading incentive programs for Jewish Book Month with fine practical, tangible gifts for the students' reading accomplishments. This year, School Director Evelyn Brier and I tried to accent the special sensitivity and caring of *Tzedakah* as its own reward. "Climb the Double Mitzvah Ladder" inspired our students to participate on several levels; it involved the wider Temple adult community; and it rekindled our Jewish values.

This program was subsequently awarded a prize—the Goldberg Award—through the Bureau of Jewish Education's (of Rhode Island) program for creative projects. In addition, *Shofar Magazine*, in its March 1986 issue printed two of the book reports from a sampling that was sent to them (see box); these were later reprinted in the *Rhode Island Herald* (March 28, 1986) in an article entitled "Essay Winners Applauded," along with photos of the young Jewish essayists.

Lillian N. Schwartz is Librarian of Temple Emanu-El in Providence, Rhode Island and administrator of AJL's Sydney Taylor Manuscript Competition.

Sample book reports written by participants in Temple Emanu-El's "Climb the Double Mitzvah Ladder" reading incentive program.

Eric Parness
Grade 5, Age 10
Temple Emanu-el
Providence, Rhode Island

Sonja Shield
Grade 5, Age 10½
Temple Emanu-el
Seekonk, Massachusetts

The Chanukah of Great Uncle Otto

by Myron Levoy
Jewish Publication Society

This is a story about a boy named Joshua and his Great Uncle Otto. It is near Chanukah. Josh's Great Uncle tells him stories about his Chanukah memories. One is about how he dropped the menorah and bent it but his father bent it back.

One day, Otto decides to make a present for Josh's parents. He tries to make the menorah of *his* parents with Josh's help. (Otto has arthritis.) When they are finished, Otto doesn't think it looks like *his* parents' menorah. So Josh has an idea. He drops the menorah and bends it back into place. Otto says Josh's love fixed it. Josh's parents were very proud of Josh and Great Uncle Otto.

More All-of-a-Kind Family

by Sydney Taylor
Follet Publishing Company

This is the second of a series by Sydney Taylor. It takes place in the early 1900's in New York City. It's a family of five girls, a baby brother, and the parents. The story revolves around the girls and their brother, Charlie, 6. The sisters are: Gertie, 8; Charlotte, 10; Sarah, 12; Henny, 14, and Ella, 16. A "steps and stairs" family, everyone called them.

As in her first book, the author keeps up her superb writing. It starts out with Charlie being saved from being trampled underfoot by horses. They bring the woman who saved him to their home to introduce her to their parents and they become close friends with her.

Many other things happen to them. Then, infantile paralysis strikes the city. All the mothers put camphor bags around the children's necks to keep them from getting it. Disaster! Lena had gotten it. Impossible! It was a child's disease! But no. She had it. So the family left for Rockaway Beach to get away from it all.

Finally, Lena came out of the hospital. Soon after, she was married to Uncle Hyman, Mama's brother. It was a joyous, beautiful occasion for all. This was my favorite part in the whole book. And then, for a perfect ending, they moved to the Bronx.