



## Kodesh Curriculum Overview

The Kodesh curriculum at Yeshiva Ohr Yisrael is designed to empower students with the skills they need to become independent, life-long learners. It encompasses *Gemara*, *Chumash*, *Navi*, *Mussar*, *Halacha*, and *Tefillah*.

### IYUN

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*Iyun* is the in-depth *Gemara* learning that is a cornerstone of Yeshiva education. Through the curriculum, students build their ability to understand complex *Gemaras* independently, with many boys reaching this level of independence by grade 11. For *Iyun*, the students are divided into five skill-based tracks. This system allows each boy to receive the targeted instruction he needs while giving him tools to stretch to the next level. As their skills advance, the students progress from learning the *Gemara* with *Rashi* and *Tosafos*, to include additional *Rishonim* and the *Acharonim*. While the focus in *Iyun* is the teaching of skills, there is a strong emphasis on developing an enthusiasm for learning, which breeds happy, successful students, who are driven to learn more.

### CHUMASH

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In grades 9 and 10, the students study *Chumash* in depth. They advance their learning of *meforshim* (commentaries), including comparing and contrasting the approaches different *meforshim* take.

The 9th grade studies *Chumash Shemos*, using the classic commentaries, including the *Ramban* and the *Sforno*. These commentaries broaden the boys' understanding of the different approaches each *Rishon* (early commentary) takes. The students cover such essential concepts as *Hakaras Hatov* (gratitude), *galus* and *geulah* (exile and redemption) and the ten *makkos*.

In 10th grade, the students move on to *Sefer Bereshis*, beginning in *Parshas Vayeshev* with the story of Yosef. They continue to learn *Chumash* with the classic *Rishonim*, with the addition of the *Ohr Hachaim* and the *Kli Yakar*.

### BEKIUS

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The *bekius* program at Ohr Yisrael is designed to give students a broad knowledge of *Shas* (Talmud) by learning the *Gemara* at a pace that allows them to cover a significant amount of material at a time.

They begin in grade 9, where some of the boys have a *bekius shiur* in *mishnayos*, completing an entire *seder* together. The *rebbeim* build up the boys' independent *Gemara* skills incrementally so that by the time they reach grade 12, the boys are able to learn one-on-one with a *chavrusa* (study partner), with the *rebbei* there only to offer support.



Through all the grades, *bekius* tests are given to assess students' knowledge and allow them the opportunity for review. This gives them an appreciation for all the material they have mastered. Boys are also given the opportunity to continue their studies independently, completing many *masechtas of Gemara*.

## HALACHA

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*Halacha* at Ohr Yisrael is a four-year progression through the *Mishna Berura*. Upon graduation, the students will have completed five-sixths of the *sefer*. In addition to gaining halachic knowledge, the students are trained in independent study skills. Through testing, they learn to take notes and extract the important information needed to come to the final halacha on their own.

Grade 9 focuses on the first *chelek* (section), which discusses laws of daily living. In grade 10 they learn the *halachos* of *davening* and *brachos/birkas hamazon*. Grade 11 learns *hilchos* Shabbos (the laws of Sabbath), and in grade 12 they study the *halachos* of the many *Yomim Tovim* (Jewish holidays). The 12th-grade studies are done in conjunction with the Dirshu International daily *halacha* program, and the boys are tested through the Dirshu International network.

## MUSSAR

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Ohr Yisrael was founded on the teachings of Rabbi Yisrael Salanter, the founder of the *Mussar* movement. *Mussar*, the refinement of character and proper relationships, is a fundamental cornerstone of our yeshiva. There are daily *mussar sedarim*, where the *rebbeim* discuss proper character development and relationships.

## HASHKAFA (Jewish Thought)

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In *hashkafa*, boys are encouraged to understand and internalize foundational Jewish philosophy. Grade 9 students study *pirkei avos* (ethics of our fathers) with the commentary of *Rabeinu Yonah*. In grade 10, the focus is on the concept of *bechira* (free will) and other topics selected by the students. The upper grades focus on a variety of topics relevant to their lives.

## NAVI

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The grade 9 students learn *Ezra and Nechemia*, which encompass the era of *Galus Bayis Rishon* (the first exile) and the building of the second *Bais Hamikdash*. They also study the weekly *Haftorah*. Navi study affords young men an appreciation for our rich Jewish history, as well as an overall understanding of the individual *neviim* and the times they lived in.



## General Studies Curriculum Overview

### MATHEMATICS

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Yeshiva Ohr Yisrael's mathematics program is designed to accommodate a range of mathematical skills and backgrounds. The courses provide opportunities for students to work at a challenging level and cover the requirements necessary for success in college math and beyond. All students take four courses in Mathematics for graduation. Sequences vary according to the skill levels of incoming students. Freshmen begin with Algebra I/II or Algebra II/Pre-Calculus and then move on to Geometry. In Grades 11 and 12, students select courses including Pre-Calculus, Statistics, and AP Calculus.

### ENGLISH

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Effective communication is essential for every aspect of life, and Yeshiva Ohr Yisrael's primary focus in the English department is to ensure mastery of English usage and communication skills for all of our students. Critical reading and writing are emphasized in each course. All students take four years of English for graduation. The Grade 9 English course is designed to give students a solid overview of the major genres in the study of English and to expose them to a sampling of excellent literature in each of the genres. During our time together the class will explore a great variety of material including novels, poems, videos, primary and secondary sources, and more.

The Grade 10 World Literature course involves a sampling of literature from around the world. In both Grades 9 and 10, students present their work projects to their class and receive feedback.

In Grades 11 and 12, the students work in American Literature and British Literature with a focus on extensive readings, analytical writing, grammar, reading comprehension, vocabulary, spelling, and writing. Additionally, 12th-grade students will also be challenged with essays from magazines such as *The New Yorker*. Additionally, there is a module on Effective Academic Writing with a focus on critical thinking, research, structure, language, and grammar.

### SOCIAL STUDIES

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The Social Studies program is designed to provide students with a strong understanding and appreciation of their place in the world through the study of history. Writing and research skills are emphasized throughout the program. Students are expected to demonstrate their



understanding of ideas and concepts and to think, speak, and write critically about them. All students take four years of Social Studies for graduation.

In Grades 9 and 10, students take Ancient History and World History. Ancient History covers the years 3,000 BCE – 476 CE, beginning with the ancient Mesopotamians and ending with the fall of the Western Roman Empire. Students look at the differences and similarities between modern peoples and ancient peoples and examine how ancient peoples have influenced the arc of history and have shaped who we are today. World History covers the years 476 CE – 1918 CE, beginning with the fall of the Western Roman Empire and ending with the Great War. Tapping into their knowledge of ancient history, students explore the making of our modern world and study the great variety of countries, leaders, cultures, and styles of government that have developed. In Grade 11, students take either AP United States History or regular US History. In Grade 12, students study Jewish History to provide a context for understanding Jewish culture and history. Additionally, students can choose from a variety of electives which include AP Microeconomics and AP Macroeconomics.

## SCIENCE

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Yeshiva Ohr Yisrael educates students to achieve the literacy necessary for understanding science and technology. Our students need to comprehend the implications of technological advancements and be able to make informed choices about scientific matters that will affect their lives. All students take four years of science for graduation.

Freshmen commence their science studies with conceptual physics and then move on to chemistry and biology in their sophomore and junior year, respectively. Seniors have options including Topics in Biochemistry, AP Physics C: Mechanics, and AP Biology. All students take four years of science for graduation.

## COMPUTER SCIENCE/BUSINESS STUDIES

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Yeshiva Ohr Yisrael considers a background in computer science and business as essential in the education of high school students. All students take four years in this discipline area. The sequence includes JavaScript to introduce students to coding and then proceeds to Python for a deeper understanding of computer coding. In Grade 11, students learn the basics of businesses. The capstone course in this area is Entrepreneurship in which students review successful companies and design a business that will then be reviewed and critiqued by their teacher and classmates.

The Business Studies course includes both a theoretical and pragmatic approach. The core areas include business and its environment, people in organizations, marketing, operations, and project management, finance and accounting, and strategic management. The case studies range from entrepreneurial businesses to multinational companies and illustrate key terms and concepts. The course includes a class trip to a local business; this enables the students to observe several layers of a company, e.g. production, warehousing, distribution, and marketing. For those students who are interested, there is the option to participate in an



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in-depth module - Analysis for Financial Management that includes, among other things, interpreting financial statements and evaluating financial performance.

## **HEBREW**

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All students take three years of Hebrew language (Ivrit). The focus is on reading, writing, listening and speaking skills in Hebrew. Students will acquire literacy in Hebrew after three years and many will have adequate fluency in speaking and listening.