

Jewish Early Childhood
Education Initiative
(JECEI)

2007



School as a Place of Inquiry:

Children, Teachers and Parents
as Researcher











THE MARJORIE & MARK GERSHWIND
CAMPUS OF LIVING JUDAISM







The Samuel Priest Rose Building, The JCC in Manhattan





Created in the Divine Image

(B'tzelem Elohim)



Creating a dialogue with the child's potential is the essence of teaching. -- Carla Rinaldi, 2004







For consideration:

What does it mean to us to say we (children, teachers, parents) are created in the Divine image?

What do we believe about children, their capabilities and how they learn and grow best?

How are we (and how are we not) creating a dialogue with their potential?

If we believe children are researchers, what does this mean for our role as educators?

constructing relationships

listening as the foundation

Listening as a process of reflection, of openness to ourselves and others

Listening as a way to cultivate ideas, to participate, to change...





Learning the process of documentation as a listening strategy

















Making learning visible in order to build relationships.

For consideration:

What supports us in listening fully?

When do we take time to reflect together, and share thoughts, theories, ideas?

What strategies do we use in order to get to know children better? And families?

Which types of documentation can become more significant?

Which tools should we prepare?

An Environment that

- Shares who we are
- Reflects and supports inquiry
- Invites wonderment
- Creates a sense of belonging





A photograph of a stone wall with a plaque. The wall is made of large, rectangular, reddish-brown stone blocks. Above the wall is a bed of smooth, rounded river stones. The plaque is a light-colored, irregularly shaped stone with Hebrew text and an English translation. The ground in front of the wall is a light-colored, textured surface, possibly sand or gravel.

כַּחַם מֵאֵין חֶסֶף הָעוֹלָם וְעַד סוּף
כִּן הַיָּם מֵאֵין חֶסֶף הָעוֹלָם וְעַד סוּף

*As water flows from one end
of the world to the other,
So does Torah!*









For consideration:

Who are we? What is our identity?

What next steps do we want to take to make our environments more inviting, unique and reflective of our values and our community?

What learning do we want to make visible?

Children and Adults as Co-Learners and Researchers

Awakening
(Hit'orerut)



children as researchers

We give
significance to the
constructive and
interpretative
potential of human
beings.













QuickTime™ and a
TIFF (Uncompressed) decompressor
are needed to see this picture.























Documentation as a **process** of getting to know children and sharing their **learning strategies** and building upon them

Peekaboo Window: 3's and 4's Investigation Project



Questions for consideration and to support observation:

- Why are children fascinated by the peep hold windows?
- Why do they care about the other side?
- Why do they care if other children notice them?
- How do they use the windows?
- What are they looking at, observing?
- Do they need to be recognized?
- What games do they create?
- What "languages" do they create?
- What methods of communication are they developing?
- Who is interested in it?
- How do other children respond?
- Do ideas carry over between rooms?
- How do they physically relate?
- Is there a difference in how boys and girls use the windows?

(Feel free to consider other questions you think of)

Creating questions
for collaborative
inquiry to support
observation,
documentation,
interpretation
and further
learning together

Toddler Investigation Project Questions

We generated questions together to support us in knowing better how children are developing a connection with the new space, and how they are developing a sense of belonging.

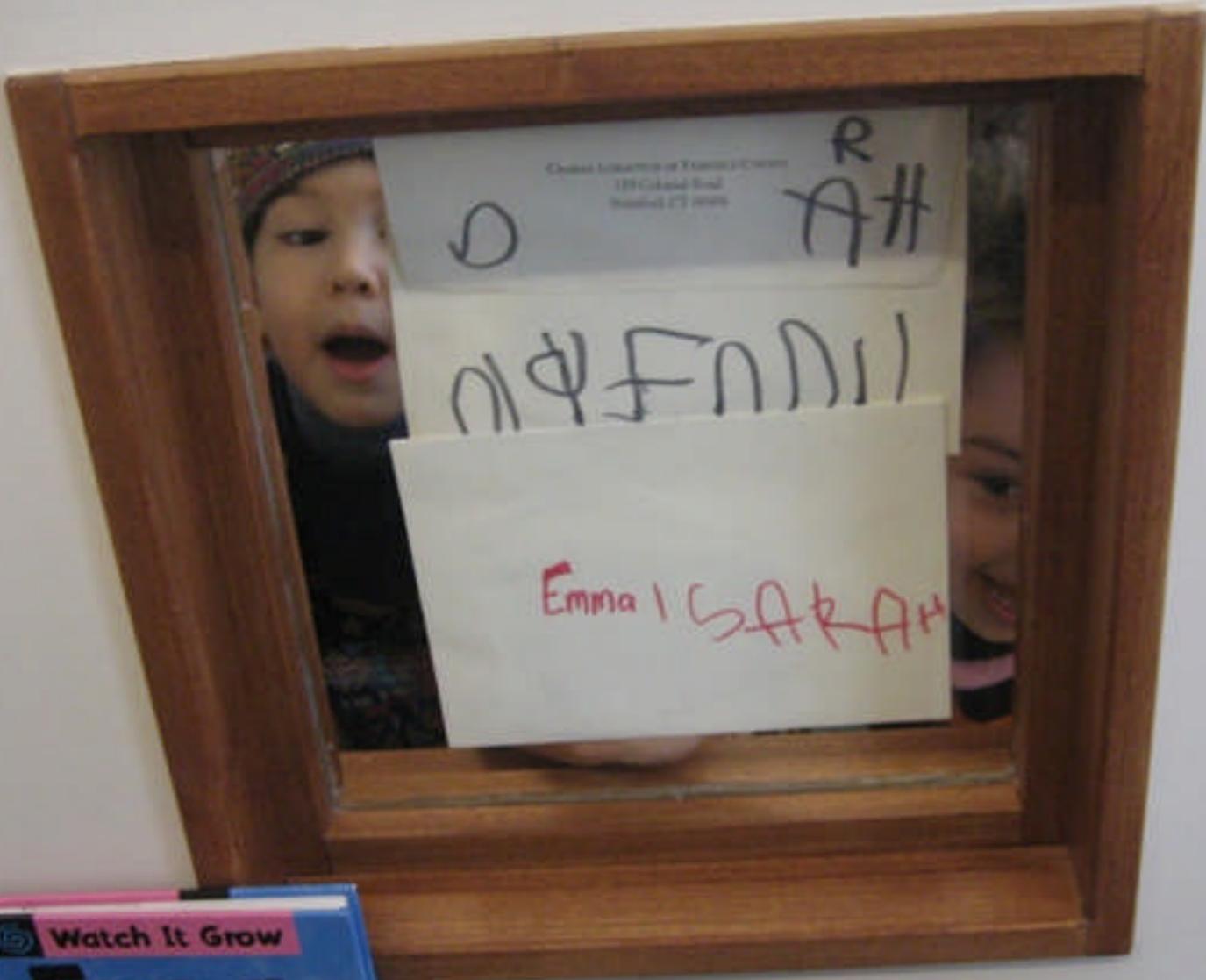
1. In the new classroom, what attracts the children's attention and why?
2. How does the space influence the children's relationships with each other? What do they share with each other?
3. What strategies do the children use in order to get to know their space?
4. Do the children bring things from home to help them feel more comfortable in the new space? What other strategies do the children use in order to develop a sense of well-being?
5. What do the children notice about the new space? How do you know this?
6. What materials are the children drawn to? How do they use these materials? What do they chose to ignore? How does this change over time?
7. How are the children responding differently now in the classroom compared to your 'old' classroom?
8. How does the furniture influence their behavior?
9. What are the children's impressions of the new space? How do you know this?
10. What are different children feeling during this new phase?

... there are many other questions that we could ask ourselves ...









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R
AH

MΨFNII

Emma | SARAH



Watch It Grow

Frog



RAINBOW
FROG

Draw my frog. Use your imagination.





















For consideration:

How would we like to foster deeper inquiry,
reflection, amazement, wonder ... and
awakening in our community?

Interpretation and Expression

D'risha



Thinking with our hands...





































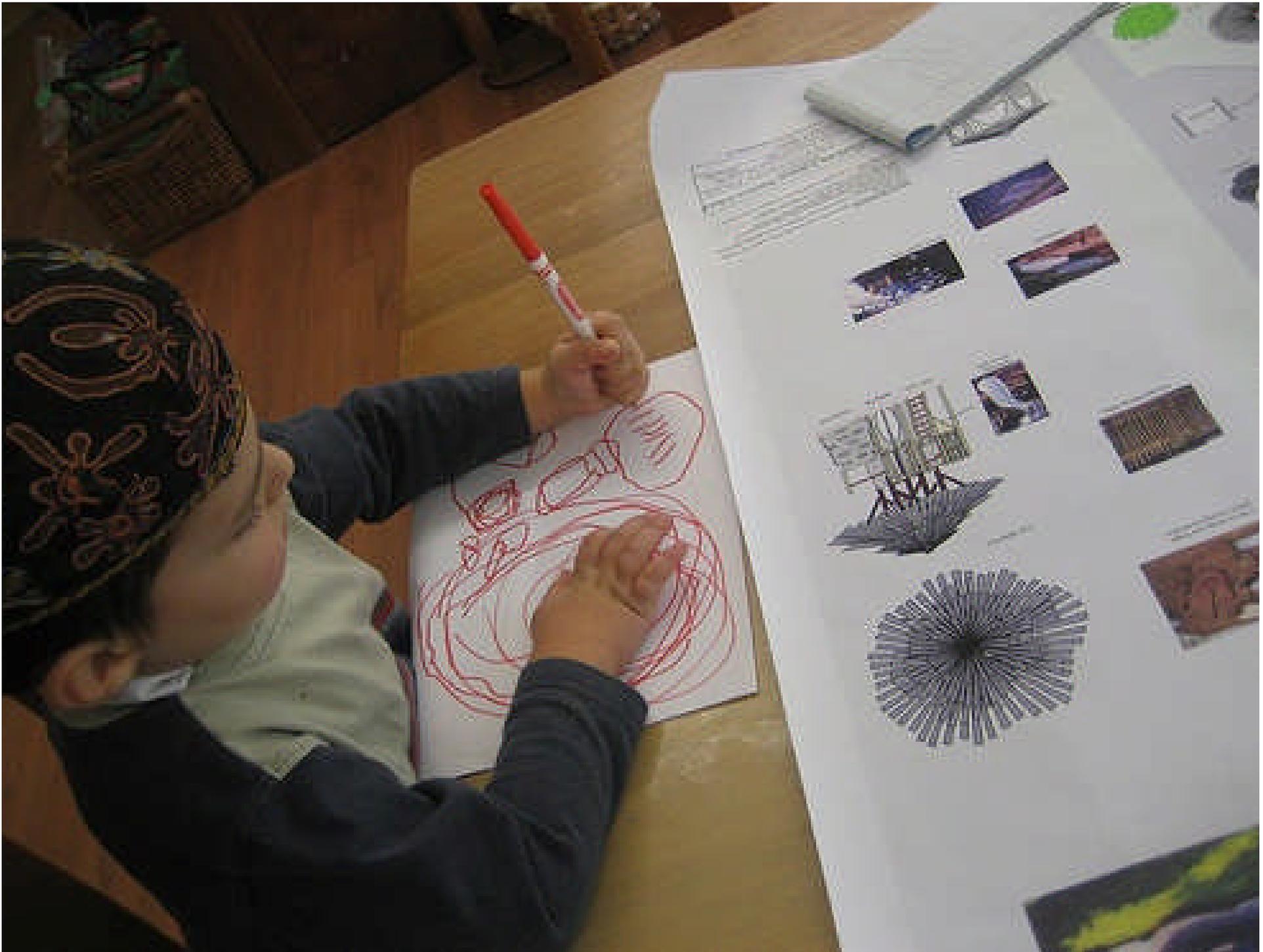


















Documentation

Can be seen as visible listening; it ensures listening and being listened to.

Producing traces—to make visible the ways we learn about each other.



Baruch Ata Adoshem
Elokeynu melech
ha'olam,
Shehechiyanu,
vekimanu vehigiyanu,
la'azman hazeh.

The first taste of
watermelon of the
season.

Thank you God for
bringing us to this
moment.

ברוך אתה יהוה אלקינו
עלך העולם, שהחיינו וקיימנו
והגיענו לזמן הזה.

Baruch atah adonai elohenu melech ha-olam, she-hechiyanu
v'kiy'manu v'higi'anu la-zman hazeh.
Praised are You, Lord our God, King of the universe, for granting us
life, sustaining us, and for helping us to reach this day.



EXPLORING OUR NEW CLASSROOM

ROOM VAV - JAN 5

Although this was a very short week in the Sun, it was an extremely significant one! The yelkies spent their time investigating and discovering their incredible new space.



Yelkies looking at books



Yelkies looking at the pictures



Yelkies looking at the pictures



Yelkies looking at the pictures



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Yelkies looking at the pictures



Yelkies and Yelkies are really enjoying the first day of school in the new building! We were so happy that Yelkies they could join us.







Reflecting
together,
valuing
participation
and creating a
culture
of inquiry
and
dynamic
learning



To support the daily life of research:

Image of the Child / Created in Divine Image

Relationships, Listening

Environment and Time

Children and Adults as Co-Researchers

Interpretation & Expression

School as a Place of Inquiry

thank you.