

Tu B'Shevat, Honi, and Sensory Rich Experiences for My Pre-K Class

Tara Giarraputo

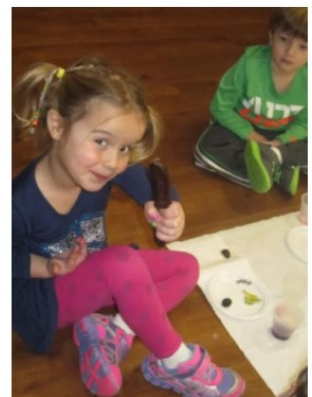
Just as they planted trees for me, I am planting trees for my children and grandchildren so they will be able to eat the fruit of these trees. – Honi and the Carob Tree

Tu B'Shevat is a wonderful holiday that provides educators the opportunity to teach about Judaism, our earth and the importance of planting for our future.

My Pre-K class at [North Shore Synagogue Nursery School](#) on Long Island experienced *Tu' B'Shevat* a few weeks ago through sensory awareness and sensory education. Many unique hands-on activities were facilitated through the learning of the carob tree. It is a tree fruit native to the land of Israel.

A special story and important lesson can be taught about the carob tree during the holiday of *Tu B'Shevat*. The story is about Honi who is a mystical wise man who thinks it is a silly idea to plant a carob tree because, according to the Talmud, by the time the tree bears fruit it takes 70 years. This story is based on the idea that we plant trees for our children's children because we patiently invest in the future (trees) even when it is a long process with no immediate gains (fruit). **In other words, the fruits of our labors will be harvested by future generations.**

Pictured below are the fun experiences that children in Pre-K participated in, as we learned about the traditions and customs of *Tu B'Shevat*.



About North Shore Synagogue Nursery School and their nature environment:

North Shore Synagogue Nursery School has an Outdoor Classroom that provides children with the fundamental and necessary development of a child's physical, cognitive, social and emotional health. The Outdoor Classroom offers open play areas that include a building area, nature art area, music area, sensory and vegetable gardens, grape vines for harvesting for Shabbat, a gathering area, dirt digging area, a theatrical stage and a rain barrel for water play. The Outdoor Classroom provides an abundance of learning opportunities for Jewish holidays, traditions and celebrations.

Tara Giarraputo is a pre-k educator at North Shore Synagogue Nursery School and an early childhood nature educational specialist. [Read Tara's full bio here.](#)

[Click here for more about the talmudic tale, Honi and the Carob Tree, as told and interpreted by storyteller Peninnah Schram](#)

[Click here to read a previous post about North Shore Synagogue's Nursery School outdoor classroom.](#)