

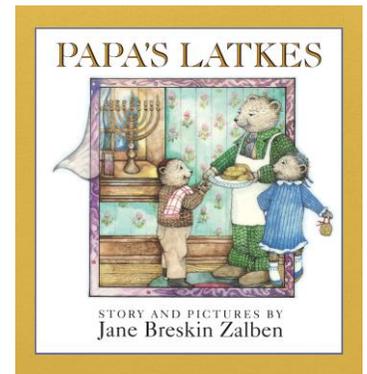
Read the PJ Library Book

Papa's Latkes (3's)

Written and Illustrated by Jane Breskin Zalben
Published by Henry Holt & Company

Synopsis

Mama Bear doesn't feel like making the latkes this year, so Papa suggests having a latke contest. The children's first attempts are too burnt or too raw, lumpy or frumpy. Papa takes over and shows everyone how it's done. He makes large stacks of delicious latkes. Mama adds the applesauce and sour cream, and the family is ready to celebrate Chanukah with candles, songs, and games of dreidel. And what does Papa give to the children for presents this year? Frying pans for everyone!



Discuss the Jewish values and vocabulary with one another

Chanukah - *Cha-nu-kah* - חַנּוּכָּה

From generation to generation - *L'dor va-dor* - לְדוֹר וָדוֹר

Cooperation - *Shi-tuf pe-u-lah* - שִׁתּוּף פְּעוּלָה

Chanukah – Chanukah.

The story of Chanukah* is a tale of victory of the Jewish people led by the high priest Mattathias and his sons (the Maccabees), over the Syrian-Greek army in 167 BCE. The triumphant Maccabees then had to clean and restore the defiled Holy Temple. The final step in rededicating the Temple (the Hebrew word *Chanukah* means dedication) was relighting the *Ner Tamid*, the Eternal Lamp, for which pure olive oil was required. The one cruse of pure oil discovered lasted a miraculous eight days, so the rabbis of ancient times declared Chanukah “days for praise and thanksgiving” (Talmud, Tractate Shabbat 21). Part of the celebration famously includes foods cooked in oil, such as potato latkes or *sufganiyot* (jelly doughnuts.)

*Chanukah can be spelled in many ways, varying the “n’s”, “h’s”, and “k’s”, such as Hanukkah or Channuka. The author of the following webpage quips, “At least it’s always the same in Hebrew!”

<http://joemaller.com/601/sixteen-ways-to-spell-hanukkah/>

From generation to generation – *L’dor vador*. A wise man said, “Ask! Ask! How else will you learn?” This, in a nutshell, is the basis of Jewish learning and the method by which we pass information from one generation to another. Jewish tradition stresses asking questions (think of Passover), and telling stories. Passing along knowledge and tradition in this way provides continuity of the culture, and creates shared experiences and intimacy within a family. In *Papa’s Latkes*, the father gives each child the experience of making latkes. He gives the children the tools for continuing the tradition with his promise to instruct them. He hopes his children will pass on the tradition of making these tasty treats “*l’dor vador*,” from generation to generation.



[For more on *L’dor vador* see the Resource Guide for *Chanukah!*]

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Cooperation – *Shituf peulah*. Cooperation and community are core values of Jewish life. Prayer services require a *minyan*, a quorum of ten, in order to recite many of the most sacred prayers and to read publically from the Torah. The *chanukkiyah*, the eight branched menorah used on Chanukah, is in some ways a physical representation of cooperation. The *shamash* or helper candle is used to light the other candles, and together the lights brighten up the dark nights that begin the winter season. What other ritual objects can you think of that hint at cooperation?

Imagine your community living these Jewish values.

How would your classroom change?

How will families be involved?

In the Classroom / Centers

- ✧ **Chanukah/Oil:** The old adage “oil and water don’t mix” can be the theme of your **science table**. Colored water, oil, and jars of different shapes and sizes can also be an **artistic** addition to a windowsill.
- ✧ **Chanukah/Oil:** The Maccabees had to search for pure oil for the Temple. Your **dramatic play** area can feature a small (unbreakable) cruet which is hidden each day for children to find in order to “rededicate” your classroom.
- ✧ **From generation to generation:** In this book, Papa teaches the art of latke making to his children. Encourage each student to **teach a skill** to his or her classmates, such as drawing a flower, singing a song, or tying shoes. Take your class to teach a skill or song to a younger classroom.
- ✧ **From generation to generation:** Ask your families to talk to their child about some of their ancestors, such as a grandparent or great-aunt. Perhaps they will write down their story in a few sentences. Make time to share these and other family stories at **morning meeting**.
- ✧ **Cooperation:** Design cooperative relay races to play during **outdoor or large motor-skill** time. For example, direct the children to pass potatoes from one to another until they fill a basket. Then make latkes!
- ✧ **Cooperation:** Get a Chanukah band together in your **music center**. Provide some great tunes and instruments to play. Children can take turns being the vocalists, musicians, and adoring fans.



Bridging Home and School

Latkes, Pirogues, and Doughnuts, Oh My!

Latkes are the Chanukah food of choice for many Jews of Eastern European decent. *Sufganiyot*, AKA jelly doughnuts, are the rage in Israel. What other delectable fried-in-oil treats are out there? Latin families may eat bimuelos, fritters, while some Polish chefs fry *paćzki* (pronounced **pawnge-key**), a sphere of rich dough filled with preserves. Invite your families to share their family recipes with your class. Maybe you will be fortunate enough to have a parent come to class and teach everyone to make some tasty delights.



Oil Tasting

Set up an olive oil tasting table for your families at pick-up time, using bread cubes – regular and gluten-free – to sop up the aromatic oil. You and your students may create some herb-infused oils (read below for bacteria-safe recipes) or partner with a local kosher bakery to try out different breads as well. Enlist the families’ help to graph the results of everyone’s favorites.

Family Engagement at Home

Praise and Thanksgiving

Did the rabbis of the Talmud know that someday Chanukah and Thanksgiving would coincide? Unlikely, but this year the lunar calendar gives us the perfect opportunity to blend traditions of two holidays. After all, both holidays are based on the struggle for religious freedom. Uncle Henry’s cranberry sauce might be perfect with Cousin Sue’s latkes. A family’s Thanksgiving tradition of saying “thank you” before their feast may become part of future Chanukah celebrations. Ask your families how they plan to combine traditions of Chanukah and Thanksgiving, and share “*Thanksgivukkah*” with everyone.

Share

 your stories and experiences with everyone.

What happened?

How can the learning go deeper?

Tell us a story... of passing on knowledge from one to another

Highlight the moments in your classroom when children teach each other skills. For example:

Papa Bear isn’t the only teacher we know. Bobby is a pro at pouring his own water from the pitcher at snack time. He showed us how to use two hands to keep the pitcher steady. Now we can all pour our own water with hardly a drop outside the cup.

Submit a story for our eNews! PjGtS@hgf.org

More

 resources and websites for inspiration

“Oil” you need to know about olive oil <http://www.oliveoilsource.com/page/cooking-olive-oil>

Potato experiments and other fun facts <http://www.sciencekids.co.nz/experiments.html>

Relay races for young children <http://spoonful.com/family-fun/relays-races>

