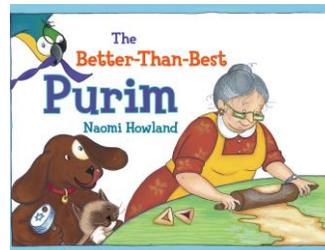


In the Field - Purim

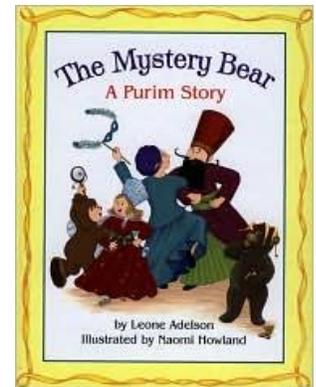
The Better-Than-Best Purim (3's)

Written and Illustrated by Naomi Howland
Published by Amazon Children's Publishing



The Mystery Bear (4's)

By Leone Adelson
Illustrated by Naomi Howland
Published by Clarion Books



What's Hidden in Each of Us?



After reading *The Better-Than-Best Purim*, Ilene Jarolem's Home-2 class at the [Educational Alliance Preschool](#) was inspired to make Purim masks. The class wanted to celebrate Purim just like the characters in the book with masks, streamers, music and noisemakers. The children started by adding paper mache to balloons. Once dry, it was time to paint. The children are excited to wear their masks on Purim day. Exploring with masks can lead us toward discussions about dressing up in costumes and can empower students to "try on" different appearances and express a hidden part of their true selves.

Magnetic Math

Miss Stacie and Miss Jodi from the Deutsch Early Childhood center in St. Louis created magnetic hamentaschen (paper triangles with magnets attached.) After reading *The Better-Than-Best Purim* the children will get hamentaschen in three colors on a cookie tray. The children will first sort by color and determine which colors had the most/least hamentaschen. Another activity focuses on one-to-one correspondence. Children will match a set of "hamentaschen" with dots to their matching triangles with numbers. Then the Little Old Lady will come to bake with the class!

More Hamentaschen Math

A conversation with ECE Director Chaya Tamir of The Gan Montessori School in Miami inspired even more hamentaschen math based on *The Better-Than-Best Purim*. Children can sort a container of pastry fillings by separating a mixture of dried cherries, prunes, and apricots. Include fillings such as poppy seeds, lemons, and chocolate chips to sort by size and color.

Taking the Mystery Out of Community

The Mystery Bear led to a rich discussion about community and caring for everyone within a family, classroom, school, and neighborhood. The children opted to create *mishloach manot* baskets for the other Pre-K classrooms. What a nice surprise!

The Mystery Bear on the Red Carpet

The children at Park Avenue Synagogue are creating their own Purim costumes from recycled materials at school. They will get their inspiration in part from the fanciful costumes in *The Mystery Bear*. Who are you wearing, Mr. Bear?

Engaging Families

"Supurim" in St. Louis



If you had a super power what would it be? ECE Director Marty Schaeffer from the [Shaare Zedek Early Childhood Center](#) in St. Louis is hoping to capitalize on a love of superheroes by inviting families to a "Supurim" Celebration. Everyone will come dressed in their favorite superhero costumes and enjoy an evening of "mayhem and *mishegos*" (Yiddish for craziness). Amidst the madness is a *tzedakah* project, too. Families are asked to use macaroni boxes as *groggers* (noisemakers to blot out Haman's name). Collected pasta boxes will go to a food pantry after the holiday.

Pinch or Fold?

There is an ongoing debate about whether to fold or pinch the dough circles to form the triangle cakes. Stefani Pollack, PJ Library mom and cupcake blogger (www.cupcakeproject.com) swears by the folding method. Where do you stand on this issue? Photo courtesy of J. Pollack Photography (<http://www.jpollackphoto.com>).

