

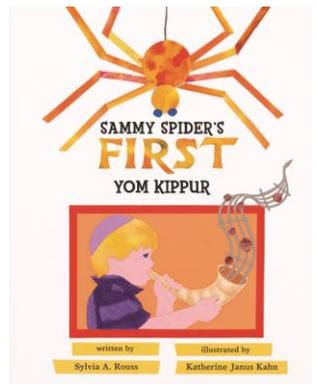
Read the PJ Library Book

Sammy Spider's First Yom Kippur (3's)

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Synopsis

Josh Shapiro comes home from school blowing his hand-made shofar. He is anxious to begin his homework project – creating a list of people who deserve his apologies before Yom Kippur. Sammy Spider listens to Mrs. Spider's explanations of Yom Kippur and the blowing of the shofar, but alas, spiders don't go to synagogue. Mrs. Shapiro offers to help Josh with his homework after dinner, and she asks him to clean up his toys. Toy-cleaning becomes a game of indoor soccer, with accompanying mess and a broken honey pot. Guess who Josh apologizes to first?

Discuss the Jewish values and vocabulary with one another

Repentance - *Te-shu-vah* - תְּשׁוּבָה

Forgiveness - *S'li-cha* - סְלִיחָה

Shofar - *Sho-far* - שׁוֹפָר

Repentance – Teshuvah. *Teshuvah* (repentance) is a major topic of conversation as we approach Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. It is interesting to note, and wonderful to emphasize in your classroom, that Judaism teaches we have the opportunity - and obligation - to correct our mistakes every day of the year. The Talmud teaches: "The Day of Atonement atones for sins against God, not for sins against man, unless the injured party has been appeased" (Mishna Yoma 8:9). In other words, Yom Kippur does not provide us with an automatic clean slate. We should try to correct our mistakes and clear up misunderstandings as they happen.

[For more about "Teshuvah" please read the *Red, Blue and Yellow Yarn Resource Guide*.]

Forgiveness – Hebrew. Just as it is difficult to say "I'm sorry," it can be equally difficult to say, "I forgive you," when our feelings are hurt. When someone comes to apologize, we are put in a position of power. We can allow the offender peace of mind, or pursue a type of revenge by refusing a



gracious response. The Rambam (Rabbi Moshe ben Maimon, revered 12th century Spanish philosopher and scholar) wrote: “It is forbidden to be cruel and difficult to appease, rather, a person must be quick to forgive and difficult to anger and when the sinner asks for forgiveness he should forgive him willingly and wholeheartedly ...” (Laws of Repentance 2:9-10).

Shofar – Shofar. Most people think of the shofar as coming from a ram’s horn, but it can come any of several kosher animals with horns: ram, goat, gazelle, antelope or bighorn sheep. The horn can be trimmed without harm to the animal. There are three B’s to shofar making: it has to be boiled, bent, and beautiful. **B**oiling cleans the horn thoroughly and removes the inner cartilage. The curved (**b**ent) shape reminds us not to be rigid and to bend as we pray. Making it **b**eautiful is an example of *hiddur mitzvah*, beautifying the commandment. Jewish tradition suggests we do each mitzvah to the best of our ability and add a component of beauty and art. Shofars are polished to enhance the grain and character of the horn. The sound of the shofar is a like a wake-up call, galvanizing individuals and the community to action. The blasts remind us of our mistakes and urge us to strive for better in the coming year.

Imagine your community living these Jewish values.

How would your classroom change?
How will families be involved?

In the Classroom / Centers

- ☆ **Shofar:** The sounds of the shofar are like warning bells telling us to wake-up and think about the world around us. In your **social studies** area, in addition to a shofar, display a variety of “bells and whistles” such as alarm clocks, police whistles, egg timers and doorbells. Discuss what each instrument and sound is supposed to tell you.
- ☆ **Shofar:** Invite a guest to blow the shofar for your classroom during **morning meeting**. Ask the children to pretend they are sleeping so the shofar can wake them up. Listen to the three different types of blasts the shofar makes: *te-ki-yah*, the call - one long note; *she-va-rim*, a broken sound - three notes; *te-ru-ah*, trumpet - nine quick notes. What do the children imagine the shofar is saying?
- ☆ **Teshuvah:** Use the puppets in your **dramatic play** area to enact familiar scenarios of mistaken behaviors, such as grabbing toys or interrupting a conversation. Ask the children how the puppets can correct their mistakes and do teshuvah.
- ☆ **Teshuvah:** It’s difficult to say “I’m sorry” at any age. Stock your literacy center with “I’m sorry” cards to decorate and deliver.
- ☆ **Forgiveness:** **Practice the skill** of saying “I forgive you” with your students. When a classmate has the courage to apologize for a transgression, a response of forgiveness brings welcome closure to the incident.
- ☆ **Forgiveness:** Learn the song “Let’s Be Friends, Make Amends” and sing it during **music time**. Or you can learn a new “Teshuva Song” by Lisa Litman. [You can always listen to songs at pjfor.me/Sing-a-long and find lyrics at pjfor.me/SongLyrics]



Bridging Home and School



Shofar So Good

Many communities have a traveling shofar factory. Invite your school families to participate in a shofar-making event. Alternatively, you could hold a shofar-blowing workshop. You'd be surprised how many children are naturally able to blow the shofar. The technique is not dissimilar to making a "raspberry" sound with compressed lips. Who will be able to make the loudest wake-up call? Ask your rabbi or other school officials to comment on how each shofar blast inspires them to do teshuvah.

Holiday Greetings

Share traditional holiday greetings with the families of your students. *L'Shana Tova* is the Hebrew expression for Happy New Year. That's appropriate for the time leading up to Rosh Hashanah and all during the holiday season. On Yom Kippur, and immediately before, the greetings change to reflect the solemn nature of the holiday. Many people fast on Yom Kippur to achieve a deep spirituality, and wish each other *Tzom kal*, an easy fast. Another greeting is *Ge-mar tov* -or- *Ge-mar cha-ti-mah to-va*. The Hebrew literally means "may things finish well" or "may you end with a good seal." This really means "May you be destined for a year of health and prosperity."

Family Engagement at Home

Set a Powerful Example

The best way to teach our children to say "I'm sorry" is to say it to them. Write a letter to your classroom parents explaining that you will be modeling apology etiquette in the classroom. For example: "I'm sorry I didn't notice your hand was raised. Please forgive me," or "I'm sorry I was cranky this morning. I stubbed my toe getting out of bed." Encourage your families to do the same and share feedback about this experience.

Share

 your stories and experiences with everyone.

What happened?

How can the learning go deeper?

Tell us a story... about forgiveness

While we often focus on the child in class who corrects a mistake, remember to acknowledge the child who open-heartedly forgives a friend. For example: *When Sarah accidentally knocked over Mikey's juice, Mikey said, "That's okay. I'll help you clean up."*

More

 resources and websites for inspiration

Shofar <http://judaism.about.com/od/holidays/a/whatisashofar.htm>

Admitting mistakes <http://tinyurl.com/shalomsesame-owning-up>

PJ Library blog pjfor.me/sesame-yom-kippur

