

Read the PJ Library Book

The Only One Club (4s)

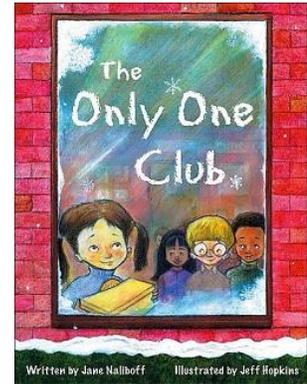
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Synopsis

While working on a class activity, Jennifer discovers that she is the only Jewish child in her class. Later that evening Jennifer's parents help her appreciate her unique status. Jennifer proudly makes herself a glittery badge, and creates the Only One Club. At first Jennifer is reluctant to let her classmates join her club, but the students make the case that they are each special in their own way. Jennifer creates badges for everyone as they all celebrate their uniqueness.



Discuss the Jewish values and vocabulary with one another

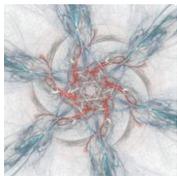
Each person is unique - *A-dam ya-chid* - אָדָם יְחִיד

Community - *ke-hi-la* - קְהִילָה

Introducing the value of the uniqueness of every person *Adam yachid*

From Jewish teachings

One tenet of Judaism is that within every person there is something unique only to them. The Biblical story of Creation notes that God made the first human *b'tzelem elokim*, in God's image (Genesis 1:26). Yitz Greenberg, a contemporary religious thinker, notes that being created in God's image means that, like God, every person has infinite value and uniqueness; we are therefore all on equal footing.



For the teacher

- What do you consider your most unique attributes? What aspects of you are reflected in your classroom?
- How do you set up your classroom to meet the needs of a diverse student population?
- What policies, customs, or changes to the classroom environment have evolved that take into account students' unique talents and challenges?

Questions for children

- Let's talk about some of the things that make you special. We can start by thinking about the things you like to do and the places you like to go. (*Teachers may want to write the children's answers down so their responses can be used in the "I'm thinking of someone who..." guessing game described in the Classroom/Centers section of this resource guide.*)
- Is there an area of the classroom or an activity that makes you feel the most like "you?"

Introducing the value of community *Kehillah*

From Jewish teachings

Jewish tradition strongly encourages every person to “give back” to their community. The Talmud teaches that we are responsible for one another, and notes that within 30 days of moving to a new community, a person must begin to contribute to the community’s soup kitchen. Within a year of joining a community, the new resident must help with the community’s clothing and charity drives, and must assist with the repair of the community’s structures (Bava Batra 8a).

For the teacher

- What can you do to foster students’ sense of belonging to - and contributing to - the school community? Keep in mind that your classroom may be the first experience your students have with community outside of their family.
- What are some of the aspects of community that you would like to convey to the children in your classroom?
- What steps can you take to help the families feel like they are part of the community?

Questions for children

- A community can be a neighborhood you live in or a group that you belong to, such as a team. What groups or communities do you belong to?
- Why is it good to be part of a community?
- In what ways do you help your community and the people in it?



Imagine

 your community living these Jewish values.

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

In the Classroom / Centers

- ☆ **Adam yachid/uniqueness:** At **morning meeting** play an “I’m thinking of someone who...” guessing game. Use answers generated earlier (see **Questions for children** in the **Discuss** section of this guide) or details you know about each student. Formulate a three-part statement that describes a child in the class. For example, “I’m thinking of someone who has red hair, recently became a big sister, and loves to draw.” See how quickly the children can guess the identity of their unique classmates.



- ☆ **Adam yachid/uniqueness:** In the **art center**, use fingerprints as a means of demonstrating individual uniqueness. Ask children to create fingerprint animals using (washable) ink, paint and other materials. Encourage children to notice the uniqueness of each print and design.

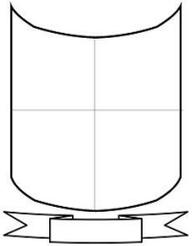
- ☆ **Kehillah/community: Cooking** is a wonderful community activity. Allow every child to prepare one type of fruit or vegetable for a salad. Arrange the individual plates of fruits/vegetables in an assembly line. As the children select the ingredients for their salad, comment on how their creations reflect their uniqueness and working together as a classroom community.

- ☆ **Kehillah/community:** Tour your school building as part of a **social studies** project. Identify all of the people who help support your school community, such as office and maintenance staff or Head of School. The children can even interview each worker they meet. Take photos and create a *Community Helpers* book for your classroom **library**.



Bridging Home and School

One-of-a-kind event



Invite families to a one-of-a-kind evening, designed to highlight the uniqueness of every family. Start with a pot-luck dinner of family specialty dishes or an hour spent singing favorite songs. The highlight of the evening could be designing and decorating a family coat-of-arms. (See article below.)

Give us a hand

As we read in the Discuss section of this guide, the Talmud suggests we contribute to food banks and provide clothing for the needy. Ask your class which type of collection they would like to support. Then place a large box or bin in the school lobby and ask your families to bring these items to school. Every time a family deposits an item, invite them to decorate a cut-out of a hand and tape it to the sides of the collection bin. Not only will the hands beautify the collection bin, but they'll serve as a visual reminder of the ways in which many hands working together can support the community.

Family Engagement at Home

Show your support

Send home a list of kid-friendly activities that families could undertake in order to support the community. They might like to walk dogs at an animal shelter, participate in a charity walk-a-thon, or take a walk around the block and pick up trash. Encourage families to take pictures or videos of their family at work and post them on the classroom web page or school website.

Share **your stories and experiences with everyone.**

What happened?

How can the learning go deeper?

Tell us a story... about community.

To strengthen your classroom's bond to the school community, your class might choose to "adopt" an area of the school or playground to care for throughout the year. Write an ongoing story about the class' choice and how their caregiving efforts are progressing. Read it to your class like a chapter book.

For example: *Our class elected to adopt a small tree in the corner of the playground. "It looks lonely," declared Josh. Katy and Sam agreed. Karen and Roger spearheaded the team making paper fruit to drape on its branches for Sukkot, while Jody reminded us to make bird feeders. "We can't have hungry birds in our tree," said Sharon as John nodded vigorously. In winter we plan on surrounding the tree with snowmen, and in spring we will plant pretty flowers around the base of the tree.*

More resources and websites for inspiration

Make a family coat of arms: http://www.education.com/activity/article/Family_Coat_Arms/

Family and community: <http://pjlibrary.org/pj-blog/index.php/archives/7367/learning-about-tzedakah-and-social-justice/>

Being made in God's image: <http://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/created-in-gods-image/>

