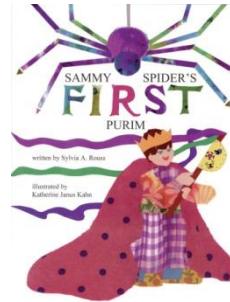


## Read the PJ Library Book **Sammy Spider's First Purim (3s)**

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### Synopsis

Sammy Spider is lured by the rhythms and sounds of Jewish life. As Josh and his family prepare for Purim, Sammy is drawn to the whirr of mixing hamentaschen dough and the snip-snip of costume making. Sammy's curiosity gets the best of him, and he winds up inside a grogger (a Purim noisemaker). How will Sammy escape, and what additional Purim lessons will he learn? For more about Purim, [click here](#).

## Discuss the Jewish values and vocabulary with one another.

Curiosity – *Sakranut* – סִקְרָנוּת

Not standing idly by/rushing to help – *Lo ta-a-mod (al dam re-e-cha)* – לא תעמוד על זם רעך

### Introducing the value of curiosity *Sakranut*

#### From Jewish teachings

Curiosity and asking questions play an important role in Judaism. Abraham, considered the father of monotheism, exemplified the quality of curiosity as he puzzled over the existence of God (Genesis Rabba 39:1). The traditional mode of Torah study consists of turning a text “over and over” (*Pirkei Avot* 5:26) by asking questions and trying to extract the most meaning from it. The Passover Seder and its four questions is an example of questions leading to deeper understanding.

#### For the teacher

- What are you curious about?
- How do you find answers to your questions?
- As a teacher, how do you nurture children’s curiosity?
- How do you insure that questions play an important role in the daily life of your classroom?



#### Questions for children

- Being curious means asking questions because you want to learn more about something. What was Sammy curious about in this book?
- What questions do you have about Purim or about this book?
- Why is it important to ask questions?



## Introducing the value of not standing idly by/rushing to help others *Lo ta-amod*

### **From Jewish teachings**

In Judaism there is no such thing as a passive bystander. The Torah states, "Do not stand idly by the blood of your neighbor" (Leviticus 9:16). Rabbinic scholars explain that all who witness someone in a dangerous situation—whether a robbery, a physical injury, hunger, poverty, or illness—must act quickly to prevent harm (Sanhedrin 73a). The rabbis caution, however, that one should not endanger one's own life to save another.

### **For the teacher**

- What factors typically prevent an individual from helping others?
- The Torah teaches we should help one another unless it puts our own life at stake. How do we help children recognize when it is safe to jump in to help?
- What types of "help" can children realistically offer?



### **Questions for children**

- When Sammy was stuck inside the grogger, who acted quickly to help him?
- Can you describe a time when you rushed to help someone who was in trouble?
- What should you think about before you jump in to help someone else?

# Imagine your community living these Jewish values.

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

### **In the Classroom/Centers**



❖ **Sakranut/curiosity:** Asking questions is a wonderful way to study **visual art**. Show your students well-known pieces of art on a tablet, computer, or print. Choose art with relatable objects, such as people, animals, or flowers. Allow the children to ask questions about what they see before you share any information about the piece. Record their inquiries, and then tackle answering them together as a group.

❖ **Sakranut/curiosity:** At **snack time or morning meeting**, play 20

Questions with the children. Have one child find an object from the classroom and place it inside a small box or bag. Invite the class to ask questions about the object and guess what it is. Take turns. You can stretch the limits of their imaginations by suggesting that the children **THINK** of a thing or a person for the class to guess.

❖ **Lo ta-amod/rushing to help:** Brainstorm IF/THEN scenarios with your students, and create a chart of possible events where someone might need help. Help children learn when it is appropriate to take action themselves, and when they need to ask a grown-up for assistance. For example: IF a child spills their juice, THEN . . . or IF a friend falls and hurts their foot, THEN . . . Once the chart is completed, have children choose different situations to act out.

❖ **Lo ta-amod/rushing to help:** We can all lend a helping hand, but how else can we use our bodies to help others? Go **outdoors** and use the whole body in fun and simple relay races, where children have to carry a basket together, pack and unpack a box, or fill a bowl with popcorn for snack.



From mamaslikeme.com  
20 Easy Relays for Kids



## Bridging Home and School

### Something from nothing

Parents are always curious about what's going on at school, yet things sometimes get lost in translation between school and home. Stimulate everyone's curiosity and conversation by sending home a riddle to solve at the end of the day or over dinner. For example: Today we did something outside with a starting line and a basket. What was it? (Answer on the previous page.)



### HELP!

Parents have hidden talents, many of which could benefit your classroom. How do we encourage families to rush to help? Many schools create a survey about parents' professions and interests. Why not include a lottery with the survey? (This certainly works around the Purim holiday, as the Hebrew word, pronounced pu-reem, means "lots.") When you pick their number, they win the right to join your classroom. Maybe a talented dad will entertain your class with The Beatles' classic "Help!"

## Family Engagement at Home

### Home work

Children love having a real sense of purpose in their homes. Encourage parents to make the connection between the action that children do at home and how it helps the family. For example, it's important to feed the cat so that she's not hungry. The task then becomes more meaningful and significant.

# Share your stories and experiences with everyone.

### What happened?

### How can the learning go deeper?

#### Tell us a story . . . about indulging our curiosity.

Spend a day looking for moments when a child is deeply engaged with an activity or showing wonder. Perhaps it's the way he turns an object over and over, or how she studies bugs in the playground. Take a picture. At a later time, reflect on this picture with your student. Do they remember what they were thinking or wondering about?



# More resources and websites for inspiration

Helping makes us happy: <http://bit.ly/happy-helpers>

Asking good questions: <http://bit.ly/asking-questions-today>

Asking children questions: <http://bit.ly/questions-and-learning>

How to explore art through questions:

[http://getty.edu/education/kids\\_families/exploring\\_art/index.html](http://getty.edu/education/kids_families/exploring_art/index.html)

