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Does your spirit change with the seasons?



When the Spirit Moves You

The Hebrew word for “wind,” ruach, also means “spirit” – the inner state of our souls. In this story, the wind reflects moods that shift inside all of us: It’s tired, then angry, then cheerful. The author of the original Yiddish story on which “Good Night, Wind” is based was a poet and teacher named Moyshe Kulbak. He dedicated this tale to the children at the orphanage where he taught. Perhaps Kulbak focused on the wind’s grouchy mood to show his young readers, who faced difficult circumstances in the world, how to keep up their ruach – their spirit – and find friends even when they felt lonely. To learn more, visit pjlibrary.org/goodnightwind.

HANDS ON!

Make a Wind Catcher

A homemade wind catcher can help you “see” the wind as it blows through, just like the illustrations in this book.

Supplies:

Wire hanger
Tape
Ribbons

Tie lengths of ribbons (around one foot long) at intervals along the bottom of the wire hanger. Use tape to anchor the ribbons in place on the hanger. Hang your windcatcher outdoors, and then watch – does the wind look angry? Playful? Tired? The wind’s moods can change quickly, just like a person’s.

Go, Team!

People and nature help each other in this story. The wind creates snowdrifts and piles of leaves for children to play in; when the wind blows the tree’s leaves away, it also helps the tree get ready for winter. At the end of the story, the children use those same leaves to build a cozy bed for the tired wind. The Hebrew word for this kind of partnership is shutafut. We see the consequences of not offering partnership: after the tree, the rock, and the country inn have all shunned the wind, it responds by whipping up “a whistling, screeching blizzard” that disrupts many towns. The world works better when we lend others a helping hand rather than turning a cold shoulder.

Weather the Storm

There’s a reason people say they are “carried away” or “swept away” by a feeling – big emotions can feel like a giant wind blowing right through us. When we notice disturbing feelings, we can think about ways to “weather the storm,” such as waiting for the wind raging inside us to subside. As parents and caregivers, we help children notice and name their big feelings, which can help them find a way out of an internal storm. generation”), adults play a meaningful role by teaching and modeling positive values and traditions to children. What better hand-me-downs could there be?

TALK IT OVER WITH YOUR KIDS

WHEN have you felt like the angry wind in this story – like no one understands what you need or what you’re trying to say? What happened?

WHY do you think the sister and brother decide to help the wind find a place to rest?

NAME your favorite season: summer, fall, winter, or spring. How does your favorite season make you feel?