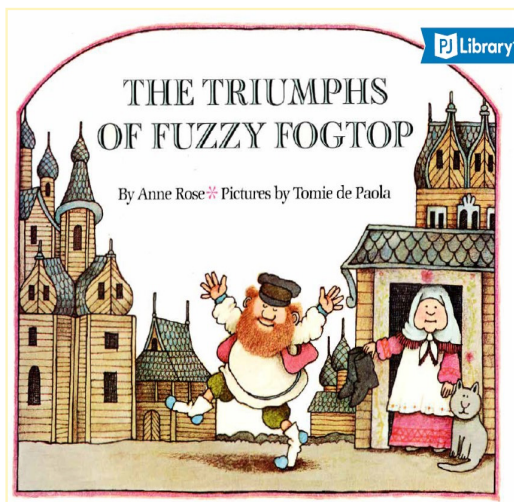


The Triumphs of Fuzzy Fogtop

written by
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illustrated by
Tomie dePaola

{ What makes us laugh? }



HANDS ON!

Take a Trip to Nowhere

When Fuzzy gets on the train to Minsk, it doesn't move – but when Fuzzy gets off, he still sees everything with the eyes of a tourist. Take a “trip to nowhere” in your home and try seeing your surroundings with fresh eyes.

Supplies
Chairs
Notebook
Pen
Imagination

1. Set up your “train” (a few chairs in a line). If you have any friends or siblings who would like to ride with you, offer them tickets.
2. Ride the train to your new destination. When you get off, explore this new, strange place. What does the furniture look like? How do the people and pets here behave? Write down your observations in your notebook.
3. Now ride the train back home. When you arrive, tell your family all about your travels.

Is This Pinsk . . . or Chelm?

Fuzzy Fogtop lives in Pinsk, but this collection of stories is in the tradition of Chelm. Chelm is a real town in Poland, but it's also a legendary place in Jewish folklore. According to tradition, an angel was flying over the globe carrying two sacks – one filled with wise souls and one filled with foolish souls. The angel was trying to distribute the souls evenly around the world, but – oops! – all the fools fell out of the sack into Chelm. Fuzzy would certainly fit right in there. To learn more, visit pjlibrary.org/fuzzyfogtop.

Wherever You Go, There You Are

In “Fuzzy’s Travels,” Fuzzy takes a trip – or does he? Travel not only lets you experience new things, it also helps you appreciate where you come from in a new light. Soon Fuzzy realizes that “Minsk is like Pinsk, yet it isn't” – which may be another way of understanding that people the world over are more alike than different. (It may also be that Fuzzy’s train didn't move, but try explaining that to Fuzzy! After all, this is a guy who could lose track of himself in his own bedroom.)

You Gotta Laugh

Some Jewish folktales contain moral lessons, but others – including the ones in this book – are just plain silly. Humor is such a mainstay of Jewish culture that for many, a sense of humor can feel like a basic component of one's Jewishness. In many times and places throughout Jewish history, life was hard, and a little levity went a long way to making things feel bearable. Plus, in Jewish tradition, cheering someone up and lightening their mood can be a mitzvah (“commandment” or good deed). Thanks, Fuzzy!

TALK IT OVER WITH YOUR KIDS

FUZZY wants to travel to Minsk to see how life there is different from Pinsk. Have you visited any new places? How were those places similar to where you live, and how were they different?

WHICH Fuzzy story do you think is the funniest?

HAVE you ever felt confused, like Fuzzy? What happened?