

Engineer Ari and the Sukkah Express

written by
Deborah Bodin Cohen

illustrated by
Shahar Kober

{ How does teamwork help us? }

A Different Thanksgiving

The weeklong holiday of *Sukkot* is a time to express gratitude for the autumn harvest. It's traditional to build a *sukkah* ("sukkot" is the plural of *sukkah*), a makeshift hut in the spirit of our nomadic forebears who wandered in the desert. The *sukkah* also reminds us of ancient days when people slept in huts in the fields while harvesting their crops. A *sukkah* always has an opening on one side, so we can welcome guests to join us as we enjoy the bounty of the season. Learn more at pjlibrary.org/engineerarisukkah.

Welcome Wagon

A *sukkah* can be built of many different materials, and just as this book suggests, it can even be built to go! Ari's train *sukkah* drives home the central point of *Sukkot* and of this book: a *sukkah* is not meant to last very long. At the end of *Sukkot*, the *sukkah* must come down. When we set aside our attachment to our houses and all the stuff they hold, and instead spend a week eating (even sleeping!) in a *sukkah*, we are reminded of what's most important: our family and friends, our community, and the world around us.

Come Together

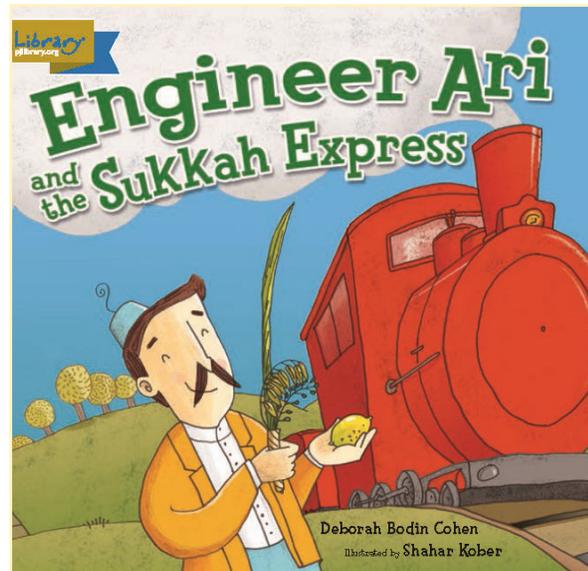
Building a *sukkah* isn't very hard, but it's even easier—and more fun—when everyone pitches in. Ari's community helps him gather what he needs for the holiday. Judaism places great emphasis on community. The Jewish covenant with God is a communal contract, and some of the most important Jewish prayers can only be said in the presence of a *minyan*, a quorum of ten people. It's no accident that many Jewish traditions and practices are designed to bring people together.

TALK IT OVER WITH YOUR KIDS

What's fun about inviting friends to your home?

Sukkot is a harvest festival. Which fruits and trees can you find in this book?

If you had a "Sukkah Express" like Ari, whom would you visit?



HANDS ON!

Make a Paper Train



Ari makes paper decorations for his *sukkah*. Make a paper train—for a *sukkah*, or for any room you like.

1 Supplies

Craft paper
Scissors
Yarn
Glue or tape



2 Draw a train engine and cut it out.



3 Draw train cars and cut them out. Consider making the train long enough to write out a word, with one letter on each car. Draw and cut out wheels—two for the engine and each car.



4 Glue or tape wheels to the engine and cars. Glue or tape the engine to one end of the yarn, then attach each car behind it, leaving a little space between each one. Display your train!

