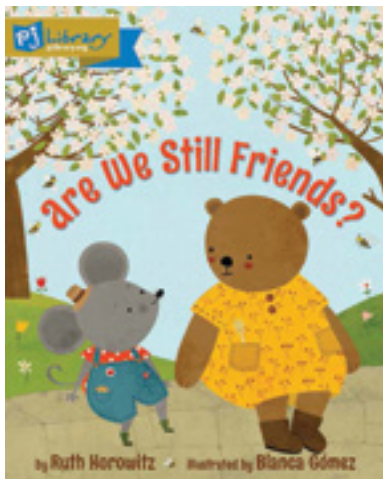


BIG QUESTION

What makes a good friend?



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Friendship - Ye-di-dut - ידידות



READ

the book for Jewish values

Judaism has long recognized the benefits of friendship. The *Book of Ecclesiastes* states, “Two are better than one. For should they fall, one can raise the other; but woe to the one who falls and has no companion” (4:9-10). Jewish sages encourage individuals to develop at least one close friendship, but they caution that “acquiring a friend” (*Pirkei Avot* 1:6) takes tremendous work and effort. Friends must learn to speak to one another respectfully, listen empathetically, and develop the abilities to compromise, cooperate, and forgive.

Optional storytelling technique

The opening pages of this beautiful book take us through the seasons of the year. Ask your students to point out evidence of each season on the page. Reread this book before *Tu B'Shevat*, the birthday of the trees, and pay special attention to the tree in each season. You may choose to read this story while children are munching on apples and honey or apple butter and toast. (A recipe for apple butter is at the back of the book.)



DISCUSS

Jewish values with one another

For the teacher's consideration

- Think of one close friend and some of the rewarding aspects of this friendship. Are there any challenges or difficulties to this friendship?
- What are the benefits of friendship for young children?
- What skills do the children in your class need to make friends? How can you help them acquire these skills?

Questions for children

- How can you tell that Beatrice and Abel are good friends?
- What do Beatrice and Abel do when they become angry with one another? What could they have done differently to avoid fighting?
- Can you think of a time when you were upset with a friend? What did you do? What might have been a different way to act?
- Why do you think we need friends?



IMAGINE

how values will come to life



How will your environment reflect the value of friendship?

Art and engineering

Create opportunities in the classroom for children to work in pairs and learn how to compromise. Suggestions are putting together puzzles, collaborative art, or block construction.

Social-emotional learning

Help children navigate the road to compromise and friendship. Use skill-building language. For example, “I see you made Simon feel happy when you invited him to play with you,” or “I know it’s disappointing that Sophie doesn’t want to hula hoop right now. You must feel proud that you were able to say ‘Ok, maybe later.’”

Outdoor play

Encourage pairs to explore the playground or park and find something they both find interesting or unusual. Have them photograph or describe their findings. Perhaps they will write a story about it.

Dramatic play

Set up scenarios where dolls are friends. Watch how the children have the dolls interact. Observing their play teaches what your students find challenging or rewarding about making friends. Document your observations and follow your students’ friendship skills as they progress throughout the year. Families will be grateful to understand their children’s strengths and challenges in making friends.



ENGAGE FAMILIES

in conversations about values

How can you deepen home-school relationships?

Perfect playdates

Help your students and their families have successful interactions with classmates outside of the school environment. Let parents know which children play well together and share common interests. Remind families that structure is helpful when playing somewhere new, and it is often best to keep playdates short.

Friendship station and display

Have materials available for caregivers and children to make simple friendship bracelets. Use wide yarn, pipe cleaners, buttons, beads, straws, or puzzle pieces from an incomplete jigsaw puzzle. Suggest that all bracelets go into a box for later distribution, so that each child will get one. You might add a small bulletin board for families to post pictures of dear friends and what they love about them.

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WEB ARTICLE

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