

# Read the PJ Library Book

## Sammy Spider's First Visit to Israel

By Sylvia A. Rouss

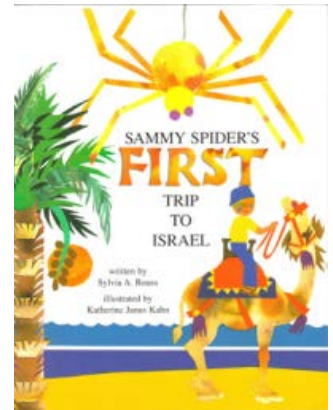
Illustrated by Katherine Janus Kahn

Published by Kar-Ben Publishing

### Synopsis

“Silly little Sammy, spiders don’t fly to Israel. Spiders spin webs,” laughed Mrs. Spider.

As a stowaway in Josh’s model airplane, Sammy Spider joins the Shapiro family’s sightseeing trip in Israel and uses his five senses to experience the sights, sounds, tastes, smells, and textures of the country.



## Discuss the Jewish values and vocabulary with one another

Love of Israel - *A-ha-vat Yis-ra-el* - אַהַבַּת יִשְׂרָאֵל

Hebrew - *Iv-rit* - עִבְרִית

Taking care of one’s body - *Shmi-rat ha-guf* - שְׁמִירַת הַגּוּף

### Love of Israel (culture and food) - *Ahavat Yisrael*.

Modern Israel is a mosaic of ancient and holy sites set among ultra-modern, high-tech buildings and stunning geological vistas. The people of Israel comprise a diverse tapestry of cultures, each with its own customs, foods, and styles. For several millennia, many Jews around the world have yearned for the opportunity to visit Israel. *Ahavat Yisrael*, the love of Israel, is highlighted in Jewish prayers and celebrations. The last words of a Passover Seder (the ritual Passover feast) are “Next Year in Jerusalem.”

**Taking care of our bodies (senses) – *Shmirat Haguf*.** An important Jewish value is *Shmirat HaGuf*, taking care of one’s body. Eating well and exercising regularly are ways to care for ourselves. Giving thanks for the proper functioning of our body is so important that it is included in the traditional morning prayers. Sammy’s unexpected trip to Israel would not have been as varied and exciting had he not been able to maximize the use of his senses.



**Hebrew-Ivrit.** Hebrew is regarded as the language of the Israelites and their ancestors. It has its own set of letters and sounds, and is written and read from right to left. About 2,000 years ago, Hebrew ceased to be an everyday spoken language and survived only as a *Lashon Kodesh*, holy language, of Jewish liturgy and rabbinic literature. Eliezer Ben-Yehuda, Russian Zionist and linguist, revived the Hebrew language in the 19th century. Ben Yehuda felt that using Hebrew as a modern language would unify the Jewish people who came to Israel from many different lands. Try incorporating the Hebrew word *shalom* (hello, good-bye and peace) or other Hebrew words into your daily curriculum.

## Imagine your community living these Jewish values.

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

### In the Classroom / Centers

- ☆ **Love of Israel:** Invite children to bring objects and souvenirs from Israel to school. Create an Israel Museum in a **Judaic Center**. Tell families you will label the tables “Feel Free to Touch” and “For Looking Only” to alleviate concern about including fragile items.
- ☆ **Love of Israel:** Archaeology is a hobby in Israel. Fashion an archaeological dig in your **sensory table**. Hang posters and pictures of ancient relics in this area. Fill the table with sand and bury Israeli coins, “shards” from pottery, shells, rocks, etc. Put archaeologists’ tools in the table, such as sifters and paintbrushes – and dig.
- ☆ **Hebrew:** Each neighborhood in Israel has its own *makolet*, a little store/café. In your **dramatic play center**, open a makolet. Place boxes and bags from food with Hebrew labels on a shelf or in a pretend refrigerator. Include Israeli T-shirts, newspapers, magazines, and menus. Ask for contributions from families and co-workers. Decorate the store with Israeli posters. Set a table and chairs for meals.
- ☆ **Hebrew:** Israeli music and dance is an important part of Israeli culture. As part of your classroom’s **large motor skills time**, teach the dance, “*Noladti L’Shalom*” (I Was Born for Peace), using the resources listed below. Ask the children to listen for the word “shalom” meaning “peace” in this song.  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9N90FZSMEx0>
- ☆ **Taking care of our bodies:** Eating healthy foods is one way of taking care of our bodies. Conduct a **sensory experience** that also promotes good nutrition. Prepare a ½ egg carton for each child. Using one section for each item, insert a healthy Israeli snack food, such as humus, and orange slice, dates, olives, cucumber, almonds, or tomatoes if your school is nut-free. Close the carton and poke a pencil hole above each item. Encourage children to use their various senses to guess what is inside each section of the carton.
- ☆ **Taking care of our bodies:** Exercise is another way we can take care of our bodies. Take an imaginary hike - *tiyul* (tee-yool) – through Israel during **outdoor play time**. “Climb” the hills of Jerusalem, “crawl” through Israel’s caves, “plant” trees in the Children’s Forest, “swim” and “fish” in the Red Sea, “walk through the sandy beach” in Tel Aviv, and “kayak” down the Jordan River. Research other places in Israel and find out where else can you go on your tiyul.



## Bridging Home and School

### Israeli Sensory Story Walk

Invite families to celebrate *Yom HaAtzma'ut*, Israel Independence Day, and take them on a sensory experience and story Walk visiting the sites described in this book. Engage volunteers from your families to help you prepare. Create the twisting alleyways by stacking large boxes; make the Red Sea by draping an area of the room with blue fabric decorated with colorful fish. The Dead Sea can be represented by containers of water with varying densities of salt – great for floating experiments. (Make sure to smell the salt water.)

### Be an illustrator like Katherine Janus Kahn

Include parents and caregivers in a painting experience as they bring children to class in the morning. Using various implements from cotton balls to rubber-band brushes\*, create art paper\* which can be used to imitate the style of the illustrator of the Sammy books. Children can then use the special paper to create a class collage or books describing favorite places or experiences in Israel. The end product will be a feast for the eyes and a surprise for the parents! (\*For detailed instructions, click here.)



## Family Engagement at Home

### Travelogue

Ask your students if they know anyone who has visited Israel. Many people have visited Israel as tourists, students, members of philanthropic groups, and as volunteers. Encourage adults to share their photos, movies, stories, souvenirs and adventures with their children at home. Children can then share what they learned at home with their classmates at school.

# Share

your stories and experiences with everyone.

**What happened?**

**How can the learning go deeper?**

**Tell us a story ... about children discovering their senses.**

Remember that parents and children alike want to reflect on children's learning. Write a paragraph that would interest children, parents, and colleagues. For example: *Last week we invited Ari's mom to class. Dr. Singer is an ophthalmologist. She brought in a large model of an eye, and taught us how important it is to take care of our eyes. We tried on glasses smeared with Vaseline so it was almost impossible to see. Tiffany commented, "It was really hard to get around the classroom when I couldn't use my eyes to see. I was really happy to have help from my friend Joey so I could find a seat at the table."*

# More

resources and websites for inspiration

Noladi L'Shalom lyrics: <http://www.hebrewsongs.com/song-noladetilashalom.htm>. Notice how many times the word "Shalom" appears.

Falafel Recipe: <http://mideastfood.about.com/od/maindishes/r/falafelrecipe.htm>

Sylvia Rouss shares: [http://www.openroadmedia.com/videos/?distribution\\_id=844](http://www.openroadmedia.com/videos/?distribution_id=844)

Senses: <http://hubpages.com/hub/5-senses-activities>

