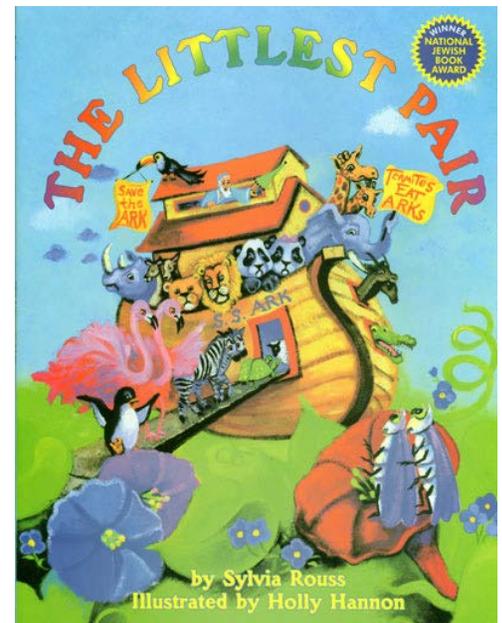


The Littlest Pair

By Sylvia Rouss

Program Focus

Age group: Ages 2-4
Time frame: 45-60 minutes
Central value: Taking care of animals (*Tzar Baalai Chayim*)
Respecting each other's ways (*Derekh Eretz*)



Synopsis

A big flood is coming, and Noah has instructed two of each animal to board his ark. However, there isn't one animal happy to see a pair of termites come aboard their temporary floating home. Things aboard the ark quickly become slippery and uncomfortable, but the little termites have a solution to their problem! All of the other creatures learn the importance of respect and watching our words in this heartwarming tale.

Goals

- Gain a concrete understanding of how we already take care of the animals we encounter
- Give additional ideas for how we can care for animals in the future
- Appreciate that caring for animals is a Jewish value that goes all the way back in time to the days of Noah

Submitted by

Sarah Keselman- Boston, MA

Plan in advance

Prepare Stick Puppet Termites

Materials

- Copies of the termite picture (attached) on white card stock
- Wide craft sticks
- Glue sticks
- Crayons
- Pictures of other animals (optional)



Prepare Bird Feeders

Materials

- A large pinecone for each child (found in craft stores if they can't be found outside)
- Solid vegetable shortening
- Plastic bowls and knives
- Bird Seed (be sure it doesn't contain nuts in case of allergies)
- Paper plates
- Yarn
- Plastic bags for taking the bird feeders home



Prepare Scavenger Hunt

Materials

- Scavenger hunt chart (attached)
- Pencil/pen

Make Dog Treats (Optional)

Materials

- 1 tsp. Vegetable oil
- 1/2 cup Wheat flour
- 2 1/2 cup White flour
- 1/4 tsp. Baking soda
- 1/4 tsp. Baking powder
- 1/2 cup Chopped spinach
- 1/2 cup Chopped carrots
- 1 Egg
- 3/4 cup Water
- Bowls to mix ingredients
- Oven

Introduce with an activity

Make Stick-Puppet Termites

Intro

Today, we are making termite puppets. Termites are little insects that like to eat wood. They are special characters in the story we are going to read today. You'll be able to use your puppet to help us tell the story. It will only take a minute to dry and will be ready for you to use when I read our story very soon.

Directions

1. Use the crayons to color your termite however you like.
2. Put some glue on half of your stick and stick the termite to it.
3. When you're done, put your termite down in front of you.



Introduce the Story

Today, we are going to read **The Littlest Pair** by Sylvia Rouss. A 'pair' means two of something. Can everyone show me two fingers? Great, that is a pair of fingers. In the story, it rains a lot. Lots and lots of rain creates a flood. God asks a nice man named Noah to build a special boat called an ark. The ark will float on all of the water from the rain, just like our toys float in the bathtub, and everyone inside the ark will stay dry, warm, and safe. Noah invites two of every kind of animal to come onto the ark so they will be safe – he even invites bugs and insects to come on the ark. Can everyone hold up the insect they made this morning? Do you remember what kind of insect these are? Termites. Termites like to eat wood. Guess what the ark is made out of? That's right, WOOD! Let's read the story to see what happens when all of the animals and the termites get on the ark.

Read the story

Props

A felt board would work nicely with this story. Create stick-ons of the ark, Noah, a rain cloud, the termites, and a few of the other animals (use color copies from the book of the characters and then put a small Velcro sticker on the back).

Encourage Participation

While reading the book, use a felt board to highlight some of the action. Ask the children to join in some of the actions, like pretending to bang the hammer when Noah builds the ark. They can hold up their own termite stick puppets when the termites arrive to board the ark and then any time they are mentioned in the story. Explain what sawdust is and why it will keep the animals from sliding on the ark. After reading the story, explain the meaning of **tzar baalai chayim** and lead a brief discussion about caring for animals.

Follow Up Discussion

Intro

*We've just read a story about Noah and the ark he built. The ark will keep Noah and all of the animals safe from the rain. By building the ark and saving the animals, Noah is practicing an important Jewish value called **tzar baalai chayim**. This means "not causing harm to animals," but we can also think of it as "taking care of animals." In the story, Noah takes care of the animals and keeps them safe from the flood.*

Discussion Questions

1. Noah builds an ark to keep the animals dry when it rains. What other things do you think he does to take care of the animals once they are all on the ark?
2. Do you have any animals at home? What do you do to take care of them?
3. Do you have a favorite stuffed animal at home? How do you take care of it? Do you hug it? Love it? Wash it?



Follow Up activities and resources

Make Bird Feeders

Intro

We've talked a bit about how we care for the animals that live with us in our houses – our real ones and even our favorite stuffed animals. We even talked about how Noah cared for the animals on the ark. Sometimes we can even take care of animals that don't belong to us. Maybe you have gone with your parents to feed the ducks at a pond or a lake – has anyone ever done that? Great! It is very nice to help ducks and birds find food. Today, we are going to make bird feeders so the birds that live near our houses will have something good to eat. That is one way we can take care of animals and practice *tzar baalai chayim*.

Directions

1. Cover tables with newspaper and place shortening and a plate of bird seed at each table.
2. Have children choose a pinecone and tie a piece of yarn around one end of the pinecone.
3. Use a plastic knife to cover your pinecone with the shortening – you can use your fingers if that is easier but be sure to wipe up well when you are done.
4. Roll your sticky pinecone in the birdseed.
5. Take your birdfeeder home and hang it in a tree by your house!



Go on an Animal Scavenger Hunt

Intro

Noah knew how to care of every animal on his ark. Like Noah, you too can learn how to care for many different animals. In order to practice kindness to animals, we must first understand what each animal needs in order to be happy. Right now, you're going to become an animal-happiness detective. You and your family are going to search for several different animals. For each animal that you find, try to figure out what that animal needs in order to be safe, comfortable, and well-fed. We have a chart for you to fill out (see attached) which will help you keep track of all of the animals that you see. Once you've become an expert on bringing happiness to animals, you may be ready to take the kindness to animals pledge (see attached).

Resources for parents, teachers, families

Nurturing the Family

Provide families with the title and author of the book we read, a brief explanation of *Tzar Baalai Chayim*, and the websites and ideas for follow-up activities listed below.

For Families

[Nurturing Compassion for Animals](#)

PJ Library blog post

[Books about Noah from PJ Library](#)

PJ Library blog post

[Why Do Children Love Animals?](#)

PJ Library blog post

World Wildlife Fund website

<http://www.worldwildlife.org/>

ASPCA's website for kids

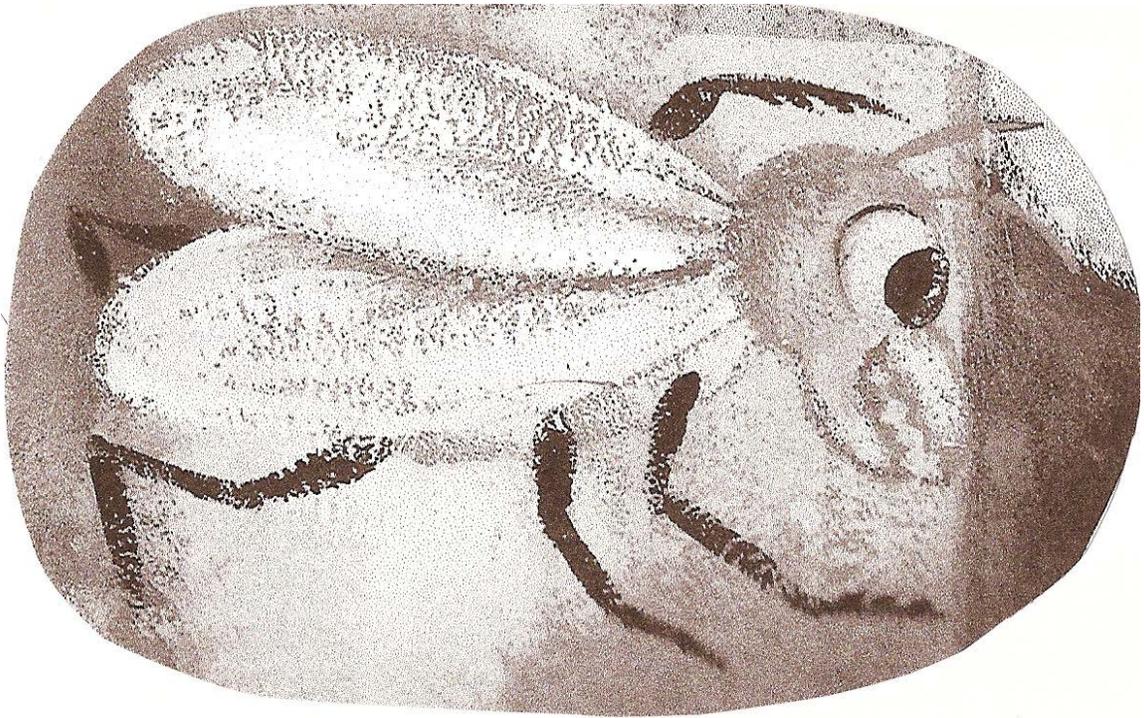
http://www2.aspca.org/site/PageServer?pagename=kids_home

PBS Kids' show "Zoboomafoo" website

<http://pbskids.org/zoboo/familyfun/index.html>

Ideas for Follow-Up Activities

- Visit a local animal shelter – before going, ask what types of donations they need and then have your children go with you to pick out/buy one or two items to donate
- Try to catch ants or spiders that you find in the house and release them outside
- Visit a petting zoo where children will have an opportunity to feed and get close to animals
- Offer to walk a neighbor's dog
- Offer to pet sit for a neighbor or relative during vacation



Animal Scavenger Hunt

Name of animal	What does this animal need to be happy?



Animal Kindness Certificate

_____ (*insert child's/ name*)

is an animal kindness detective who has discovered how to bring happiness to many different animals.

The thumbprint on the bottom of this page indicates that _____ promises to practice the mitzvah of kindness to animals as often as possible.

Date:



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