



## Read the PJ Library Book

### Here Is the World (3's)

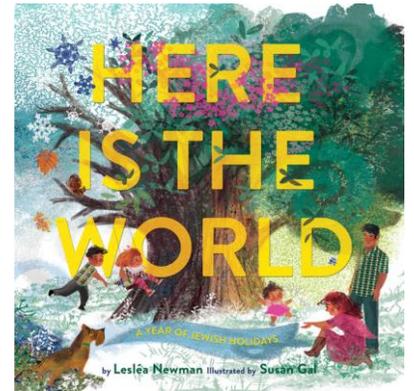
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#### Synopsis

This book takes you through a year of beautiful Jewish and secular family experiences, through delightful poetry and richly expressive illustrations.



## Discuss the Jewish values and vocabulary with one another

Family - *Mish-pa-chah* - משפחה

[Jewish] Time and seasons - *Ze-ma-nim u-mo-a-dim* - זמנים ומועדים

Ritual objects - *Tash-mi-shei ki-du-sha* - תשמישי קדושה

**Family – Mishpachah.** Family is an essential component to Jewish tradition. All Jewish life cycle events are family oriented, and no holiday celebration is complete without a festive meal surrounded by family and friends. Jewish tradition also urges families to learn together. We recognize the common phrase “Teach them [words of Torah] diligently to your children” (Deut. 6:7). Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel, a leading Jewish theologian and philosopher of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, suggested learning goes in both directions, noting that “educating children without including the entire family is comparable to heating a home with all of the windows open.”

[For more about “mishpachah” please read *The Very Crowded Sukkah* and *Dinosaur Goes to Israel* Resource Guides.]

**Jewish time and seasons – Zemanim u’moadim.** There are several differences between the Jewish calendar and the Gregorian calendar that most people around the world use. The most significant difference is that the Jewish calendar is a lunar/solar calendar. This means that each Jewish month

begins with the start of a new moon, roughly every 28 days, yet a leap month is occasionally added to keep the holidays in their proper seasons. In ancient times, the Jewish calendar was so tied to agricultural seasons that four new-year celebrations developed. The most well-known is Rosh Hashanah on the first of the Jewish month of Tishrei. The others are Tu B'shevat, the new year of the trees; Passover, the birth of the Jewish people; and the fiscal new year, which falls on the first of the Jewish month of Elul.



**Ritual objects - Tashmishei kidushah.** Objects such as candlesticks, kiddush cups, and seder plates add meaning and definition to holiday celebrations. Artistically crafted items are a reflection of *hiddur mitzvah*, or beautifying the commandment, which shows respect to the object and its ritual use. The Talmud, a collection of Jewish laws and customs, has many passages that refer to procuring the best materials for ritual objects. “In keeping with the principle of *hiddur mitzvah*, one should be willing to pay even one third more [than the normal price]” (Bava Kama 9b). Many families pass these objects along from one generation to another, adding an emotional connection to the objects.

## Imagine your community living these Jewish values.

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

### In the Classroom / Centers

- ☆ **Family:** Ask families to send in photos so you and your students can create a family book in your **literacy center**. The book can contain family activities, visits from relatives, and special events. Keep the pages in a binder and add to it all year. The book is sure to become a class favorite.
- ☆ **Family:** Compare human families and animal families as a **science and social studies project**. Perhaps a parent with knowledge about unusual animals can visit your classroom.
- ☆ **Jewish time and seasons:** Start your day with a moon report at **morning meeting**. Assign moon-watch duties to a different student and their family every few days to watch the moon and prepare for the report.
- ☆ **Jewish time and seasons:** Create a Jewish calendar series for your wall. Put the name of the Hebrew month at the top of a poster. Ask your children at **afternoon meeting** about the highlights of their day. Add photos or drawings to illustrate their activities. What a great way to document the year, through a Jewish perspective. Make sure to add all of the holidays. This works with secular calendars, too, as pictured to the right.
- ☆ **Ritual objects:** Add a ritual objects grab bag to your **game center**. Ask the children to guess an object first by feeling the outside of the bag, then by feeling the object inside the bag. Take out the object and encourage the child to share what he/she knows about its use.
- ☆ **Ritual objects:** Sit with a few students in your **library corner**. Ask the children to point to all of the ritual objects they can find in this – or any – PJ Library book.



Photo courtesy of Central Synagogue ECC, Manhattan



## Bridging Home and School

### Family Placemat

Invite families to bring fun family photos to a classroom social event. Set out placemat-sized pieces of paper and other materials for decoration, such as pre-cut letters or dried flowers. Give families time to arrange the photos and design their placemats. As the glued decorations are drying on the mats, encourage families to walk around and look at everyone's creations. Make it a scavenger hunt with clues, such as "find a picture with a funny hat," "look for someone getting a hug," or "count the smiles." Laminate the placemats and send them home or use them in school.



### Jewish Calendar Birthdays

Have a calendar converter ready on an iPad or computer as parents bring their children to school one week. This one is easy to use: <http://tinyurl.com/Hebrewbirthday> Acknowledge the children's Hebrew birthday during the year with a special treat or song.

## Family Engagement at Home

### Tell Me About It

Many objects around people's homes have a unique history or sentiment behind them. Ask your families to tell their children about the origin of some treasured piece. Perhaps the families will share these stories with the class.

# Share

 your stories and experiences with everyone.

**What happened?**

**How can the learning go deeper?**

### Tell us a story... starting with your thoughts or questions

Why did you choose a particular activity or exploration? As a teacher, you have an insider's understanding of your students. You create curriculum based on your knowledge of their personalities and their needs. Let us in on what you are thinking.

For example: *This year's group of children already seems to be changing before my eyes. I wonder if I can help the children appreciate their learning and growth. I plan to add their photographs to an ongoing calendar, and encourage them to tell me what they notice about themselves. Stay tuned...*

Then share with all of us on our private Facebook group page! <http://pjfor.me/pjgts-facebook>

# More

 resources and websites for inspiration

Should we do formal calendar time? <https://www.naeyc.org/files/tyc/file/CalendarTime.pdf>

Jewish ritual objects in the classroom <http://tinyurl.com/children-jewish-objects>

All about the moon <http://stardate.org/nightsky/moon>

PJGtS Pinterest Boards <http://www.pinterest.com/pjgts/>

