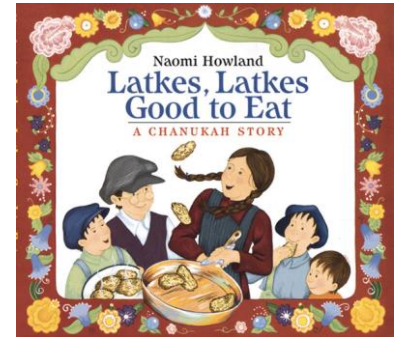


Read the PJ Library Book

Latkes, Latkes Good to Eat (4s)

Written and Illustrated by Naomi Howland

Published by Clarion Books



Synopsis

When Sadie generously shares her firewood with a poor, old woman, she is given a magic frying pan that cooks up latkes on command. Trouble ensues when Sadie's mischievous brothers ignore their sister's instructions and cook with the pan while Sadie is away.


For more on Hanukkah, see our resource page at <http://www.pjfor.me/hanukkah2015>.

Discuss the Jewish values and vocabulary with one another


Acts of loving kindness - *Ge-mi-lut cha-sa-dim* - גְּמִלוֹת חֶסֶדִים

Attentive listening - *Shmi-at ha-o-zen* - שְׁמִיעַת הַאָזְנוֹן

Introducing the value of acts of loving kindness *Gemilut chasadim*

From Jewish teachings	For the teacher	Questions for children
<p><i>Gemilut chasidim</i> refers to benevolent acts that are performed without an expectation of receiving a reward. Examples are visiting the sick, comforting mourners, and burying the dead (Shabbat 127a). Although acts of lovingkindness are to be performed without ulterior motives, biblical scholars note that kindness can reap indirect rewards, such as bringing the doer a sense of satisfaction and creating stronger, more tightly-knit communities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What indirect benefits have you experienced from performing acts of loving kindness? • How do you ensure that kindness is woven into the everyday fabric of your classroom? • What are effective ways of documenting acts of kindness and letting families know that kindness is a focus of your curriculum? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can you describe some types of people or places that may be in need of help? What are some of the ways that we can help these people or places? • What are some examples of acts of lovingkindness that you can do? • How do you feel when you help others? How does it feel when someone helps you? 

Introducing the value of attentive listening *Shmiat ha'ozen*

<p>From Jewish teachings <i>Pirkei Avot (Ethics of Our Ancestors)</i>, an ancient Hebrew text that focuses on how to be a good person, describes attentive listening, <i>shmiat ha-ozen</i> (literally a “listening of the ear”) as a precursor to learning [Torah] and acquiring knowledge (<i>Pirkei Avot</i> 6:6). More complex than hearing which happens automatically, listening is a skill that requires the ability to pay attention, empathize with others, interpret language, and read facial and emotional cues.</p>	<p>For the teacher</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What skills do you think children need to acquire in order to become good listeners? • How do you work on these listening skills in your classroom? How do you model good listening skills for your students? • What are some barriers that make it difficult for children to listen? What do you do in your classroom to minimize these barriers? 	<p>Questions for children</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What does it mean to listen? • How can you tell if someone is listening? • Why is it important to listen? • Why is it sometimes difficult to listen? <div style="text-align: right;">  </div>
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Imagine your community living these Jewish values.

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

In the Classroom / Centers



PI Library Kindness Cards

☆ **Gemilut chasadim/acts of loving kindness:** Distribute matching picture cards and ask children to find the child in the class whose card matches their own. Children with matching cards will become “*chesed* (kindness, singular) buddies.” Challenge the buddies to perform acts of *chesed* for one another throughout the day, particularly during **centers exploration** and **outdoor time**. Discuss these *gemilut chasadim* as you see them.

☆ **Gemilut chasadim/acts of loving kindness:** Select a classroom in the school that your class will shower with kindness. Ask the children to generate kindness suggestions and vote on which acts of kindness your class will enact for the chosen classroom. Graph the results of the voting as a **math** activity. Hopefully, acts of kindness will spread throughout your school.

☆ **Shmiat ha'ozen/attentive listening:** Engage children in a **creative storytelling** activity. Provide the children with the first sentence of a story. Ask the children to listen carefully and take turns adding sentences to the story. Be sure to jot down the story as it is being created and display the finished story in your **library** corner. Add props to your **dramatic play** area so children can re-enact the story.

☆ **Shmiat ha'ozen/attentive listening:** Play a sound detective game with a small group of children or the entire class, perhaps during **morning meeting** or **snack time**. While the children close their eyes, create a sound in the classroom (open and close a desk drawer, knock down a pile of blocks, run water in the sink). See how quickly the children can identify the source of the sound. You might add a sound effects CD to your **music/listening center**.



Bridging Home and School

Listen and do

A fun way to combine acts of kindness with listening is to prepare kindness challenge cards that families can pick up as they enter or leave the school building. Each card will describe a simple act of kindness that a family can do easily. The challenge is to listen carefully to the instructions on the card and carry out the kindness task as quickly as possible. Here are a few sample cards: Say “*Boker tov*” (good morning) or “*L’hitraot*” (see you soon) to a person wearing a blue shirt; find someone with a decorated backpack and offer to carry his/her backpack to the car; sing a song to someone working at a store and see if they smile.



What’s important to you?

Inform your families you will be starting to talk about *chesed* or kindness as a classroom exploration. Ask parents to tell you what they think is important for their children to understand about kindness. You might choose to host a morning coffee chat so parents can discuss this important topic with one another and share their ideas with you.

Family Engagement at Home



A double dose of kindness

Send a note to families suggesting this fun tzedakah challenge. Every time a family member spies someone being kind, the family member should drop a coin into the tzedakah box. Ask families to send in notes describing some of the kind deeds they’ve observed at home and how long it takes their family to fill their tzedakah box.

Share

your stories and experiences with everyone.

What happened?

How can the learning go deeper?

Tell us a story... about how your class is working on listening skills.

Our class has begun using two new listening activities to mark the start of a new week. Every Monday morning our class listens to (and participates in) Havdalah (the separation ceremony between Shabbat and the work week), and then sets out on a “listening walk.” We choose a direction in which to walk, either outside the building or inside, and proceed on our way as quietly as possible. When we return to the classroom we make a list of all the sounds we heard while on our walk. During the first week, we heard only six sounds, but each week our list grows longer.

More

resources and websites for inspiration

100 kind deeds for young children: <http://www.coffeecupsandcrayons.com/100-acts-kindness-kids/>

Suggestions for parents on how to raise caring kids: <http://www.pjfor.me/caring-kids>

Helping teachers become effective listeners: <http://www.pjfor.me/naeyc-good-listeners>

