

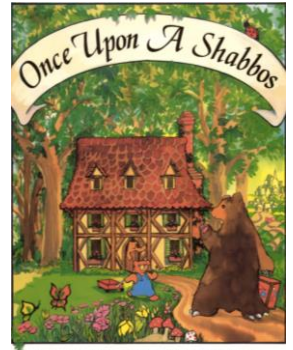
Read the PJ Library Book

Once Upon a Shabbos (4s)

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Synopsis

A hungry bear keeps stealing the honey that Bubbe needs for her Shabbat kugel (noodle pudding). When the bear reveals that he is lost and doesn't know how to return to his storybook home, Bubbe immediately invites him to celebrate Shabbat with her family. (While most children adore this story, some are initially frightened by the menacing appearance of the bear. Before reading, teachers may want to preview a few illustrations with the children, preparing the children for the bear's varying facial expressions.)

For more on Shabbat, see our guide: <http://pjlibrary.org/uploadDocs/2/Shabbat-1-Page.pdf>

Discuss the Jewish values and vocabulary with one another

Compassion/*ra-cha-mim* - רַחֲמִים

Welcoming guests/*hach-na-sat or-chim* - הַכְנִסֵת אוֹרְחִים

Introducing the value of compassion *Rachamim*

From Jewish teachings

Derived from the Hebrew word *rechem*, womb, the Jewish value of *rachamim*/compassion involves creating a protective, loving bubble around those in need. Similar to the love that a parent showers upon a child (Psalms 103:13), *rachamim* entails offering comfort, forgiving mistakes, and minimizing suffering.

For the teacher

- In order to offer compassion, one must first be able to recognize and understand the feelings of others. How do you help the children in your class develop empathy?
- Ideally, how would you like the children in your class to respond to those who are being mean?

Questions for children

- If someone is crying or feeling sad, what can you do to help him/her feel better?
- What clues can you use to figure out how another person is feeling?
- When someone is acting in a mean way or saying bad things, our first reaction is usually to get angry. What else could we do instead of getting angry?

Introducing the value of welcoming guests *Hachanasat orchim*

From Jewish teachings

Using the Jewish patriarchs and matriarchs as role models, Rabbinic scholars have created extensive hospitality guidelines. Abraham and Sarah created a feast for unexpected guests (Genesis 18), Rebecca offered water to Eleazar at a desert well (Genesis 24), and Jethro welcomed the stranger Moses into his tent (Exodus 2: 6-12). Rabbinic guidelines include offering rest before food, being careful not to embarrass your guests by watching them eat, designating a room in your house as a “guest room” with the best beds in the house, and always escorting your guests to the door (Chofetz Chaim, Ahavas Chesed 3:2).

For the teacher

- How do you encourage the children in your class to experiment with ways of welcoming others?
- What modifications could you make to your classroom’s current activities, routines, or physical environment in order to help the room feel more welcoming?
- What skills do you think the children in your class need to acquire in order to be gracious hosts and guests?

Questions for children

- What do you like about having guests visit your home? What bothers you about visitors?
- How do you make guests feel welcome in your home?
- Think back to a time when you were a guest in someone else’s house. What did your host do to make you feel comfortable?
- What could we do to make our classroom feel more welcoming to guests?



Imagine

your community living these Jewish values.

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

In the Classroom / Centers

- ☆ **Rachamim/compassion:** Encourage children to “try on” various feelings by placing a “feelings coat” in your **dress up area**. Fill the pockets of the coat with pieces of paper that describe various emotions. Use both words and pictures to depict the emotions. Ask a child to put on the coat, select a piece of paper from a pocket, and attempt to act out that emotion. See how quickly classmates can identify the emotion.



- ☆ **Rachamim/compassion:** Music can be a powerful tool for expressing emotions. Stock your **listening center** with CDs containing medleys of classical and jazz music. Ask children to listen to the music and draw pictures of the feelings/emotions that the music inspires.

- ☆ **Hachnasat orchim/welcoming guests:** As a small group **art project**, ask several children to decorate the cover of a classroom guest book.

Consider adding the position of class greeter to your **job chart**. Not only can the greeter be in charge of welcoming visitors to the classroom, but he/she can also be responsible for asking the guest to sign the guestbook before departing.

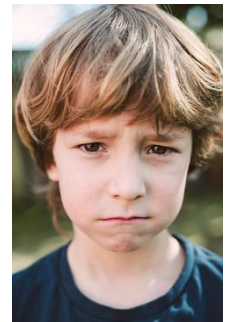
- ☆ **Hachnasat orchim/welcoming guests:** As a **math** activity try graphing the number of guests who have visited your classroom during the past week or month.



Bridging Home and School

Lights, camera, action

At drop off or pick up, encourage families to spend a moment “trying on” emotions by acting out various scenarios. Prepare index cards that ask participants to “show me how your body and face would look if...” they found themselves in a particular situation. Possible situations could include: if a big dog barked at you; if you fell down and tore your pants, if you received a much longed-for birthday present, if you were sprayed by a skunk... Instruct families to choose a slip of paper and select one family member to act out the scenario. Place a camera nearby so families can snap a picture of themselves in action. Be sure to print up the photos and display them on a bulletin board.



You're invited

Set up an invitation at a table in the school lobby. Stock the table with blank cards, markers, crayons, stickers, envelopes and even stamps. Maybe you can find some families who would be willing to donate the stamps. At drop off or pick up, families can decorate cards and write a note to someone whom they would like to invite to their house for a meal, a play date, a hike, or an outing.

Family Engagement at Home

Feelings scavenger hunt

Send home a list of the emotions that the children have been exploring in class and suggest that families participate in a feelings scavenger hunt. Parents and children can examine magazines, picture books, family photo albums, and even the pieces of art that hang in their house, trying to find images that match the emotions included in their list.

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 identifying feelings.

Write a narrative about your explorations that will interest colleagues, parents, and children.

For example:

In recent weeks our library corner has been abuzz about feelings. The children adore flipping through books, examining facial expressions and body postures and trying to describe each character's emotions. Their literary curiosity inspired us to create our own classroom feelings book. We assigned a different emotion to each child and snapped a picture of him/her displaying that feeling. The book became so popular that we ended up making four separate copies of it.

More

 resources and websites for inspiration

Teaching compassion to children: <http://nobullying.com/mercy/>

How to teach kids empathy: pjfor.me/family-values

Ideas for welcoming guests: pjfor.me/welcoming-guests

