



HOW DO DINOSAURS SAY HAPPY CHANUKAH?

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From the warm glow of holiday candles to the fun of family gatherings, dinosaurs love to celebrate the Festival of Lights. Sometimes the excitement of Chanukah can lead to some unexpected dinosaur behaviors!

The menorah is a nine-branched candelabrum whose branches represent the eight nights of *Chanukah*, with a *shamash*, or helper candle, that lights the others. Starting with one candle on the first night, we increase the number of candles each night of the holiday until all nine are glowing brightly. *Chanukah* comes at the darkest time of the year, so these candles not only help us remember and celebrate the miracles of the holiday but dispel the darkness outside at the same time.

DERECH ERETZ

The dinosaurs in this book are learning *derech erez*, the Hebrew term for following the “right path” to become a good and honorable person—a *mensch*. Behaving with *derech erez*—as these dinosaurs are striving to do—includes welcoming guests, taking turns at games, and appreciating precious moments with one another.

USING THIS BOOK AT HOME

You might consider asking some of the following questions while reading:

- Look at the family’s expressions as the dinosaurs choose mistaken behaviors. What do you think they are feeling? How do the expressions change when the dinosaurs behave nicely?

- Can you find all the menorahs and count the candles?
- Are you choosing your first family menorah? What story would you like your menorah to tell? Perhaps you’ll select a menorah that represents your child’s fascination with animals or a long-time love affair with a certain sports team! There are menorahs to fit almost any story.
- If you already have a menorah, what is its story? Was it a gift from a relative? Did you find it in a dusty box in the attic? Whatever the history, these are stories your children will love hearing, year after year. You might even make a video about your old and new holiday traditions and send it as a gift to a relative or friend.
- The saying “It’s better to give than to receive” is usually true! Brainstorm with your child what holiday gifts you could make for others—perhaps favorite cookies or a decorated cloth placemat—and then make or paint or build or bake and give to a neighbor or deliver to a nursing home.
- The traditional prayers for the *Chanukah* candles express gratitude for light and for wondrous times. What simple prayer or wish will you share with your child?

*The transliterated word *Chanukah* can be spelled in many ways—including *Hanukkah*, *Channukah*, *Chanukka*, etc. Pj