

Bitter and Sweet

written by
Sandra V. Feder

illustrated by
Kyrsten Brooker

Why is change hard sometimes?

A Sweet Break

When her family moves, Hannah is upset. She doesn't want to leave her home, her friends, and everything she knows. When she arrives in her new house, nothing feels right — until Shabbat. Shabbat is an opportunity to pause and celebrate the good things, even after a tough week. Shabbat is a complete sensory experience — Hannah sees the soft candlelight, smells the warm challah, listens to the familiar blessings and songs, tastes the grape juice, and gives her family loving hugs. Even in a strange place, the rituals of Shabbat bring Hannah's family together. And for Hannah, it's the first hint of sweetness in her new home. To learn more about easy ways to mark Shabbat, visit pjlibrary.org/bitterandsweet.

We Laugh, We Cry

Shabbat is sweet, but many Jewish holidays and rituals recall bitterness, too. Just as every life has both happy and sad moments, the cycle of the Jewish year also mixes happiness and sadness. After all, pretending that unhappy things don't happen doesn't make them go away. Acknowledging the bad with the good helps us move through hard times. At a traditional Jewish wedding, an incredibly joyful event, the groom breaks a glass to remember that life is sometimes broken, and love helps us overcome that. Joy takes precedence.

Silver Linings

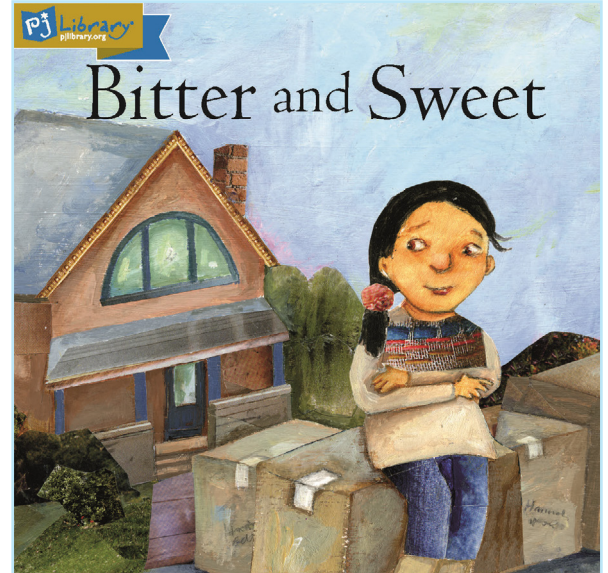
Hannah, like her grandmother before her, has to leave her home. Many generations throughout Jewish history have had to leave their towns and homelands. Even this bitter thread that runs through the history of Jewish life comes with a beautiful blessing — the diaspora of global Jewry. Because the Jewish people have moved all over the world, we now have the benefit of a diverse community filled with rich cultural practices. As Hannah's grandma says, "Every change has some hard parts and some nice parts." Hannah, too, gradually learns that moving means opening up to new experiences — some hard, some nice.

TALK IT OVER WITH YOUR KIDS

When you feel sad, how do you make yourself feel happier?

Has change ever felt hard for you? When?

Have you ever tried to help make someone new feel comfortable and welcome? What did you do?



HANDS ON!

Make a Hot Chocolate Gift Kit

Hannah's new friend Maya welcomes her with ingredients for delicious hot chocolate. Greet someone new in your community with a kit for making hot chocolate — with the bitter and sweet already mixed together.



Supplies

1 quart/litre jar

¾ cup/95 g powdered milk

¾ cup/95 g unsweetened cocoa powder

¾ cup/95 g powdered sugar

Chocolate chips

Mini marshmallows



Layer all the ingredients in the jar and top with a lid. To make a serving of hot chocolate, blend all ingredients evenly. Put a half-cup of the mixture in a mug, add 8 ounces/235 ml of hot water, and stir it up! It'll be perfectly sweetened and ready to share.