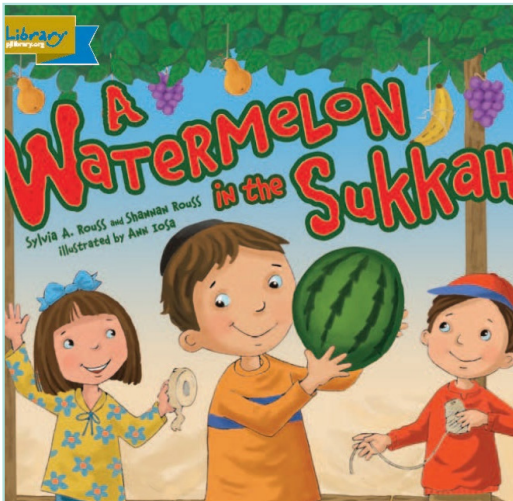


A Watermelon in the Sukkah

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{ How can creativity solve problems? }

Beautiful Bounty

These days, many of us pick our fruits and veggies at the grocery store rather than from the earth. The harvest holiday of *Sukkot* offers an opportunity to get back to our roots, so to speak. As we enjoy hanging fruits and vegetables in a *sukkah* — a temporary hut that people build just for the weeklong holiday — we can think about where those shiny apples and hearty squashes come from. Sukkah decorations tend to vary depending on the local harvest. In North America, apples, pears, bananas, and oranges — some of the fruits Michael’s classmates bring — are likely to make an appearance. Other autumn veggie treats, like squashes, peppers, and corn, may also be on display. In Israel, pomegranates and date clusters are more common sukkah decorations. But a watermelon? That’s an unusual one no matter where you are!

HANDS ON!



Make Decorative “Fruit”

Want to create hanging fruit decorations of your own? If you don’t have the real thing, create fruit from foil. Bonus: Watermelon made of foil is much easier to hang!

Supplies

- Aluminum foil
- Masking tape
- Paint and paint brushes
- Scissors
- Twist ties
- String



Choose the fruit or vegetable you would like to make. An easy one to start with is an apple. Roll some of the foil into an apple-sized ball and cover it completely with masking tape. Paint as desired and allow to dry overnight. When dry, make a loop with the twist tie and attach it to the top of the apple with tape. Tie string to the loop and hang your apple in the sukkah. You can make any fruit or veggie this way simply by forming its shape from foil. Enjoy your Sukkot “harvest”!

Do the Wave

During Sukkot it’s traditional to build and decorate a sukkah, and then spend time in it — eating, gathering with friends and even camping out. Another traditional activity involves the *arba minim* (Hebrew for the “Four Species”): an *etrog* (citron) and *lulav* (a bundle of palm, willow, and myrtle branches). What does one do with these symbols of the harvest? We hold them together and wave them in six directions: east, south, west, north, up, and down. It might look funny if you don’t know what you’re seeing, but the meaning is profound: We are surrounded by blessings. So go ahead and ride the Sukkot wave! To learn more, visit pjlibrary.org/watermelonsukkah.

The Dream Team

Against all odds, Michael is determined to get that watermelon up in the air. Thankfully, he has a lot of help. The spirit of teamwork plays a large part in the holiday of Sukkot (not to mention in bringing in a harvest!). Putting a sukkah up is often a group effort, and making and hanging sukkah decorations takes teamwork. Then there’s the food — cooking festive meals and then bringing them all out to the sukkah may be a lot of work, but it’s much easier when it’s done as a team. And of course, somebody’s got to *eat* those yummy Sukkot dishes! At the end of the holiday, the sukkah must be put away for next year, which is yet another chance to work together. With good friends by your side, you can accomplish anything — even hanging a watermelon.

TALK IT OVER WITH YOUR KIDS

WHAT fruit or vegetable would you choose to hang in a sukkah?

HAVE you ever worked together with family or friends to solve a problem? How did it go?

HOW is a sukkah different from a house?