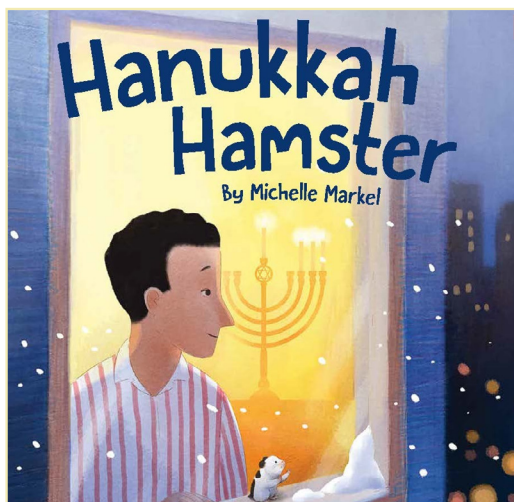


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**{ Who's in your family? (Think big!) }**

## Far-Flung Family

It's Hanukkah! Edgar has his menorah and his festive food...but his family is far away in Israel. Fortunately, he is joined by a furry friend who brings him company and laughter, and actually helps Edgar stay connected with Israel during Hanukkah. Nothing reminds us of where we come from like food, so Edgar treats himself and Chickpea to some tastes of home. They celebrate with fresh salads and delicious *sufganiyot* (Hebrew for doughnuts), the classic Israeli Hanukkah food. Chickpea gives Edgar a new reason to reach out to his family; he sends them pictures and stories about his new pal. Chickpea learns about Israel, too, as Edgar tells her all about life in Tel Aviv. Even very small friends can help us feel connected in a big way.

## HANDS ON!

### Make Handmade Menorah Cards

When Hanukkah comes, it's hard to be far away from friends and family. Let the people you love know you're thinking about them by sending them a special handmade menorah on a card.



### Supplies

- Card stock
- Colorful construction paper (or magazines that you can cut up)
- Scissors
- Glue
- Markers



Fold your card stock into the shape of a greeting card. Draw a simple menorah across the front, then cut the construction paper (or colorful pieces of magazine) into the shape of candles in various colors. Glue the candles onto the menorah and draw yellow flames on top of each one. Write a special message inside that lets recipients know that you are thinking of them. Happy Hanukkah!

## Lost and Found

When we find something someone has lost, what should we do? Keep it? Ignore it? Return it? In trying to find Chickpea's owner, Edgar practices an important Jewish value called *hashavat aveidah*, Hebrew for "returning lost objects," which includes animals. Even if we feel a "punch in the heart" about returning something we've grown fond of, it's the right thing to do. Doing the right thing always leads to feeling good about ourselves and how we've helped another person – and in this case, the resulting friendship between Edgar and Chickpea feels like another Hanukkah miracle. To learn more, visit [pjlibrary.org/hanukkahhamster](http://pjlibrary.org/hanukkahhamster).

## Dare to Be Different

Beyond the brilliant light of the menorah, the miraculous story, and the warmth of family and friends, Hanukkah has another powerful message for us. The Maccabees' fight in ancient Israel was about standing up for their right to practice freely as Jews. They show us that although it can be challenging to be different from other people, we cannot let anyone take that right away from us. Edgar knows what it's like to be different – he lives in the United States, but he's an Israeli. Most of his taxi customers during Hanukkah are not Jewish, but he is. Yet when he goes home each night, he proudly lights his menorah in the window for all to see. Like Edgar and the Maccabees, each of us can choose to embrace and defend our differences, knowing that they make us who we are.

## TALK IT OVER WITH YOUR KIDS

**WHAT** do you like to do during Hanukkah with your family?

**HAVE** you ever found a lost item or animal? What did you do?

**WHAT** things make you different from other people? How do you feel about your differences?