

# Modeh Ani, Thank You

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{ **How do you show thanks?** }

## HANDS ON!

### Follow the Leader

Preschoolers love Simon Says, the classic follow-the-leader game. Here's a spin on it that focuses on all the things we can do with our bodies.

Kids take turns being the leader. The leader calls out actions: "Modeh ani – I can touch my nose," "Modah ani – I can kick my leg," and so on. Players follow everything the leader calls out – as long as the leader says modeh or modah ani!

### Thanks So Much

The traditional morning prayer Modeh Ani gives thanks for the soul (and the body!) we wake up with. The word modeh shares a root with the Hebrew word for "thank you" – todah! It also shares a root with the word Yehudi, the Hebrew word for "Jewish." That's right: the Hebrew word for "Jews" literally means "ones who are grateful." No wonder it is a Jewish tradition to start off each morning on a note of gratitude.

### From the Moment We're Born

Modeh Ani is meant to be recited while you're still in bed, possibly while stretching out your body after a long rest. Even while lying still, our bodies are doing amazing things. Think of all the things even a newborn baby can do – breathe, smell, taste, bend, kick, and, of course, cry. From the first day we're born, our bodies are already calling out, "Thank you! I'm grateful!"

### Uniquely Ourselves

All of our bodies look different and move differently. That's part of what makes us uniquely ourselves. Hebrew is a gendered language, so whether we say modeh ani or modah ani depends on our gender identity. No matter which word we use or what our particular bodies are like, we all have something in common: we're blessed to have a body that can do so many things. When we're grateful for our bodies, we're celebrating what unites all of us as people. (Even the dog in this book seems grateful!)

## TALK IT OVER WITH YOUR KIDS

**LOOK** closely at the illustrations. What makes the kids in this book different from each other? What things do they have in common?

**CAN** you find the dog on each page? What different things do you see the dog doing? Can you do some of those things?

**CAN** you move your hands in three different way? How about your legs? How about your face?