

Pavel and the Tree Army

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How are you a stranger?

Stranger Things Have Happened

Pavel and Anatoly feel like they don't quite belong. Jewish people are no strangers to being the stranger; Jews have a long history of living as outsiders in foreign lands. The ultimate example is the hundreds of years that the Jewish people spent in ancient Egypt as strangers and then slaves. But adversity can lead to empathy. The *mitzvah* ("commandment") of showing kindness to a stranger appears in the Torah (the first five books of the Bible) a whopping 36 times, more than any other: "You shall love the stranger as yourself, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt" (Leviticus 19:34). In other words, you've been in their shoes, so treat them as you would want to be treated.

Bloom Where You're Planted

In his struggle to find a livelihood, Pavel uproots himself and travels to a new environment. At first, he and his fellow workers don't have the know-how to do the tasks they are given, but they're determined to learn. Soon land that was barren is filled with trees and becomes "a little less vast." Likewise, Pavel and his new immigrant friends seek to put down roots in the soil of America. Together, both Pavel and the trees strive and thrive. To learn more, visit pjlibrary.org/pavel.

There's No Place Like Home

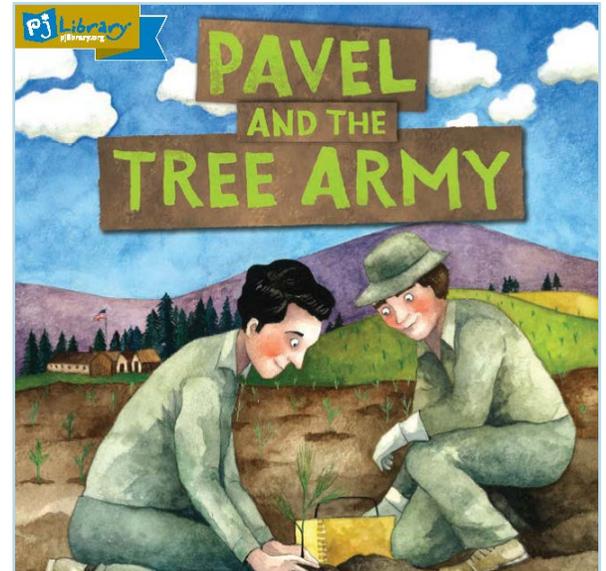
When you travel, you may bring special belongings that help you feel at home. Shabbat, the Jewish Sabbath, has been that must-have experience for the Jewish people. No matter where they have lived, Jews have lit Shabbat candles, made Shabbat blessings, and eaten special Shabbat meals. In the dry, dusty fields of Idaho, Pavel and Anatoly find comfort in singing familiar Shabbat songs together. As the writer Ahad Ha'am once said, "More than the Jews have kept Shabbat, Shabbat has kept the Jews." Wherever you find yourself, Shabbat can make it feel like home.

TALK IT OVER WITH YOUR KIDS

Think about a time when you were in a new place or meeting new people. How did you feel?

What can you do to help people feel welcome and included?

Why is it important to plant trees?



HANDS ON!

Make a Welcome Card for New Friends

Got a new neighbor on your street, or a new kid in your class? Help them plant roots in your community — make them a welcome card. Take a cue from Pavel and his friends and add as many languages as you can think of!



Supplies



1 piece of thick paper or cardstock
Crayons, markers, or colored pencils

- 1 Fold the piece of paper in half to make a card.
- 2 On the front of the card, draw a picture of yourself (or your whole family!).
- 3 Above the picture, write "Welcome" in several languages. Ask your parents to help look up the words online.
- 4 Inside the card, write a short message — something like "I'm excited to get to know you" or "I hope you like it here!" Add other decorations, if you'd like.
- 5 Give the card to a new family in your neighborhood or a new student in your class at school to make them feel welcome.