



SKY-HIGH SUKKAH

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Leah wants a sukkah of her own – but she lives in an apartment with no yard. Where could she possibly put a sukkah? Her neighbors help her think of the perfect place – and then help her make it come to be.

JEWISH CONCEPTS

The holidays of Passover and Sukkot are celebrated half a year apart, with Sukkot in autumn in the Hebrew month of *Tishrei*, and Passover in early spring in the month of *Nisan*. The festivals are very closely related, however. Spending time in a sukkah fulfills a biblical requirement to remember the Exodus:

“... dwell in booths, so that your descendants shall know that in booths I caused the Children of Israel to dwell when I brought them out of the land of Egypt” (Leviticus 23:42-43).

In the story of Exodus, the Israelites were caught between the dangers of Pharaoh’s army behind them and the Red Sea in front of them. Moses prayed desperately for help, and God’s answer suggests a feeling that is familiar to many parents of young children: *“Why are you crying out to me?”* Some people interpret this exasperated response to mean that there is a time to pray...but there is also a time to have faith and take action! When Moses acted—by raising his staff over the Red Sea—the waters parted and the Israelites escaped.

When we celebrate Sukkot, some people refer to the makeshift buildings as booths, huts, or tabernacles. Others call them *sukkot*, which is the Hebrew plural form of the word, *sukkah*. Whatever term we use, these impermanent dwellings help us honor the temporary places where the Israelites lived during their journey from bondage into freedom.

USING THIS BOOK AT HOME

In this book, a community comes together not just for companionship, but also to meet one another’s needs. After reading *Sky-High Sukkah* with your child, name the characters one at a time and ask what each person needed. It may be easy to recognize Leah and Ari’s needs, but consider asking more searching questions as well. For example, you might ask, “Why did Al leave his fruit market and head to the children’s sukkah? What did he need?”

If you don’t have space for an outdoor sukkah, food writer Tori Avey describes a mouth-watering craft project that you can enjoy indoors. Search her name online, along with the words, “mini sukkah,” and you’ll find detailed instructions for making a sukkah with graham crackers, icing, and spices.

This tasty activity gives children a chance to experience the holiday of Sukkot with their senses—seeing a visual representation of an ancient dwelling, feeling the crunch of graham crackers and the squishy softness of icing, and smelling the fragrance of cinnamon sticks and star anise. When building your mini sukkahs, talk about your good fortune, and the abundance that enables your family to experience and enjoy a wide variety of foods. Remember to listen closely, as new ideas and questions often arise when children are engrossed in an activity.