

What a Way to Start a New Year!

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How do you face something new?

For the Best

We've all had days where nothing seems to go our way. When frustrations abound, sometimes it's helpful to respond with the Hebrew phrase "*gam zu l'tovah*" ("this too is for the best"). Have you ever experienced an annoying situation that turned out to be for the best? Maybe Dina and Harry would have never met their new friends Maya and Michael if those upsetting things hadn't happened. Without the benefit of hindsight, it can be hard to know what is truly bad or good. Sometimes choosing to expect good to come out of a challenging situation has the power to make it happen. To learn more, visit pjlibrary.org/whataway.

Welcome!

Which would you rather have for your holiday meal: brisket or leftover pizza? Harry wants brisket, hands down, and gets his Rosh Hashanah wish due to a kind dinner invitation from some new friends, the Levines. The Levines practice the important *mitzvah* ("commandment" or good deed) of *hachnasat orchim*, Hebrew for "welcoming guests." Being on the lookout for community members who are lonely or going through a challenging time — like a move to a new city — and inviting them into your home opens up opportunities that benefit everyone. Guests are uplifted by the kind hospitality and hosts get the chance to make new friends — a win-win. And Rosh Hashanah, a time of new beginnings, is the perfect occasion to reach out. What a (great) way to start a new year!

Starting Fresh

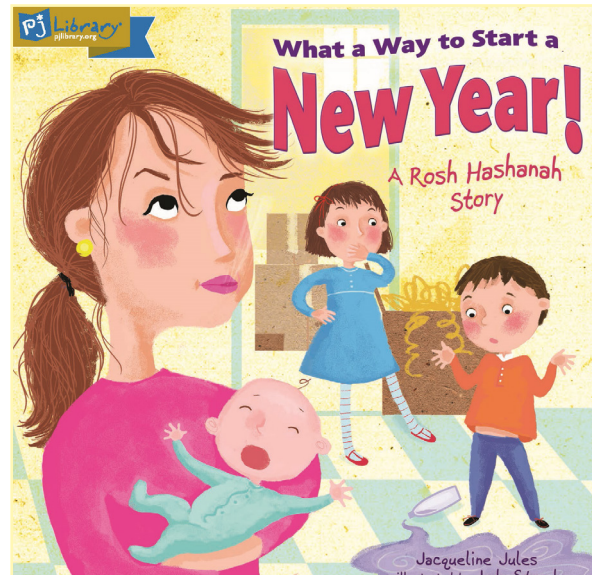
For most of us, what's familiar is often what's comfortable. It can be hard to welcome change into our lives. Dina and Harry struggle with their family's move and long to go back to their old town for Rosh Hashanah. But change is actually central to Rosh Hashanah and the entire High Holiday season. Whether we're moving to a different city, mending our relationships, or working to change our inner selves, we can choose to harness the power of this time of year by being open to new adventures and experiences. Nothing alerts us to this level of awareness like hearing the *shofar* (ram's horn), which is blown in synagogue services on Rosh Hashanah. The clear shofar blasts say: "Wake up! Change is in the air! How will you stretch and grow this year?"

TALK IT OVER WITH YOUR KIDS

How can you help a friend or neighbor who is going through a tough time?

Have you ever seen something good come out of a bad situation?

Is there a change you'd like to make this year to help you be your best self?



HANDS ON!

Easy Baked Apple Dessert

If your family is inviting guests for a special Rosh Hashanah meal, offer them a sweet treat for a sweet new year!

Ingredients

- 4 apples
- 3 tbsp melted butter
- 2 tbsp honey (plus more for drizzling)
- ½ cup rolled oats
- ½ cup raisins



Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Carefully core the apples with a paring knife (a grown-up's job). Mix 2 tbsp of the butter, honey, oats, and raisins together in a small bowl, then scoop the mixture into the cored apples. Brush apples with the remaining tablespoon of butter. Arrange apples in a baking dish or cookie sheet and bake for 20 to 25 minutes or until apple pierces easily with a sharp knife. Cool for a few minutes, drizzle with a little more honey, and enjoy!