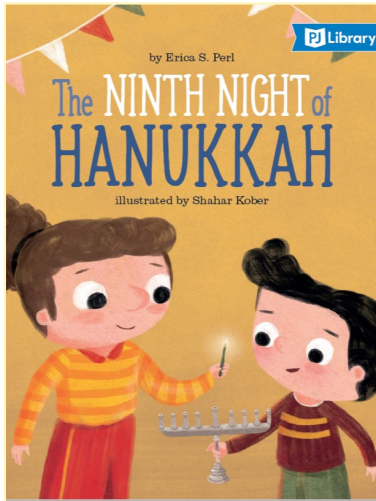


The Ninth Night of Hanukkah

written by
Erica S. Perl

illustrated by
Shahar Kober

What feels like home?



HANDS ON!

Be a Shamash!

The shamash, the helper candle, helps light the other candles on the menorah. This craft activity is a fun reminder that when you help other people, you light up the world.

Supplies:

Construction paper
Pencil
Scissors
Tape or glue
Markers
A photo of you

Draw an empty menorah on a piece of construction paper. Draw nine candles on another piece of construction paper and cut them out. Choose one candle to be the shamash and attach a photo of yourself to it with tape or glue. Attach the shamash candle to its place on the menorah. Now think of eight things you can do to help people around you and write one act on each of the other eight candles. During Hanukkah, do one of these helping acts each day. As you complete each act, add the corresponding candle to your menorah. When the menorah is full, it's time to celebrate – what an amazing shamash you are!

That Hanukkah Feeling

In this story, Rachel and Max have an idea of what Hanukkah is supposed to feel like. For many families, that Hanukkah feeling goes hand in hand with lighting the Hanukkah menorah, playing dreidel (and winning chocolate gelt, of course!), eating latkes (potato pancakes) and sufganiyot (donuts), and singing Hanukkah songs. Although Rachel and Max's family has all the right Hanukkah "ingredients" by the end of the story, what really makes it feel like Hanukkah is when the neighbors join them for their special Shamash Night celebration. Maybe the most important holiday ingredient is the people we celebrate with. To learn more, visit pjlibrary.org/ninthnight.

Bravely Different

The story of Hanukkah is about standing up for what you believe in. In ancient Israel, the Maccabees fought against the Syrian Greeks to defend the right of the Jewish people to live by the laws of the Torah (first five books of the Bible). We recall their bravery every year on Hanukkah. In this story, Max and Rachel are also brave as they move into a new, unfamiliar neighborhood. Thankfully, their new neighbors welcome them and help them feel more at home. Ultimately, it's Rachel and Max – the newcomers – who bring the whole apartment building together for a joyful Hanukkah celebration. Sometimes, being new and different can make you the life of the party.

Lighting the Way

What is that funny ninth candle on the menorah all about, anyway? It's called the shamash – the "helper" candle – and we use it to light the other candles. But that's not all. Jewish law says that the eight main candles on the menorah shouldn't be used as a light source -- they are only meant to inspire. But if we need a little extra light to see how a dreidel landed, we can use the light of the shamash. A shamash has a big job, but it's happy to help.

TALK IT OVER WITH YOUR KIDS

WHAT does Hanukkah feel like in your family?

HAVE you ever been new to a place? How did you get to know people?

WHAT are some ways you can help your friends and neighbors?