



FASCINATING: THE LIFE OF LEONARD NIMOY

Written by Richard Michelson

Illustrated by Edel Rodriguez

You may know that Leonard Nimoy played an alien on Star Trek, but did you know that key inspiration for his role came from his childhood experiences as the child of Jewish immigrants in Boston's North End? This story draws the connection between otherness, perseverance, and pursuing a dream.

JEWISH CONCEPTS

Many aspects of Leonard Nimoy's life were incorporated into his work, and his experiences were certainly reflected in the character he played on *Star Trek*—from his parents' experiences as "alien" immigrants in the U.S. to the priestly blessings he observed in synagogue as a child. When the original television series ended, Leonard Nimoy continued to creatively express many diverse parts of his life: he wrote seven books of poetry, directed six films, and created four volumes of photography.

In Judaism, integrating all the different parts of oneself is known as achieving *shleimut*, the Hebrew word for "wholeness." This book embodies *shleimut*: the author, Richard Michelson, was a friend who nurtured Nimoy's artistic gifts and displayed his photography in his gallery; the illustrator, Edel Rodriguez, used *Star Trek* as a bridge from his first language, Spanish, to English. In *Fascinating: The Life of Leonard Nimoy*, everything seems connected.

Many people search for *shleimut* in their lives. Who would have thought that a model for this value would be a Jewish hero on the starship *Enterprise*?

USING THIS BOOK AT HOME

Leonard Nimoy drew a great deal of inspiration from his cultural and religious background. Your family may enjoy learning about the ways that Jewish heritage is reflected in the thinking and work of some other well-known figures. For example, learn about:

- Irving Berlin (composer)
- Emma Lazarus (poet)
- Ruth Bader Ginsburg (U.S. Supreme Court justice)
- Albert Einstein (physicist and Nobel Prize laureate)
- Sandy Koufax (major-league baseball player)
- Stan Lee (creator of comic books)
- Daniel Radcliffe and Jason Isaacs (actors who played Harry Potter and Lucius Malfoy)

Introducing children to well-known figures in various fields can often spark curiosity and lasting interest. While your child might not be interested in becoming the next Spock, this book demonstrates that there is much about Leonard Nimoy's life that is worthy of recognition and emulation.