

Apple Days

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What's a community for?

Showing Up

Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year, is one of the two High Holidays that arrive each fall. The other is Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement. Taken together, these holidays are a time for people to think about mistakes they made in the past year and to set goals to do better in the year to come, both personally and as a community. In this story, Katy's community rallies around her in a big way. Her friends and family know she's disappointed that she can't go apple-picking with her mom — a ritual that means a lot to her. So her community steps up to help her perform the ritual in a different way that's every bit as meaningful. Rituals are powerful when they bring out the best in people — and that's what the High Holidays are all about. To learn more, visit pjlibrary.org/appledays.

An Expectant Time

What a great time of year to have a baby! Rosh Hashanah is often referred to as the birthday of the world, a time to stand in awe of the wonders of creation — like the birth of a baby. And it's a time when we try to fix the mistakes we've made, to give "new life" to our relationships. The Hebrew month of *Elul*, which leads right into Rosh Hashanah, is a month of spiritual preparation for the holiday: We settle old grievances and apologize for our mistakes so we can start the new year off right. In traditional synagogues, the *shofar* (ram's horn) is blown every morning of Elul, and the sound jolts us awake and starts us thinking about what needs repairing in our lives. One can even think of Elul as a pregnancy, a time of growth and preparation, and Rosh Hashanah as the birth and renewal.

How Sweet It Is

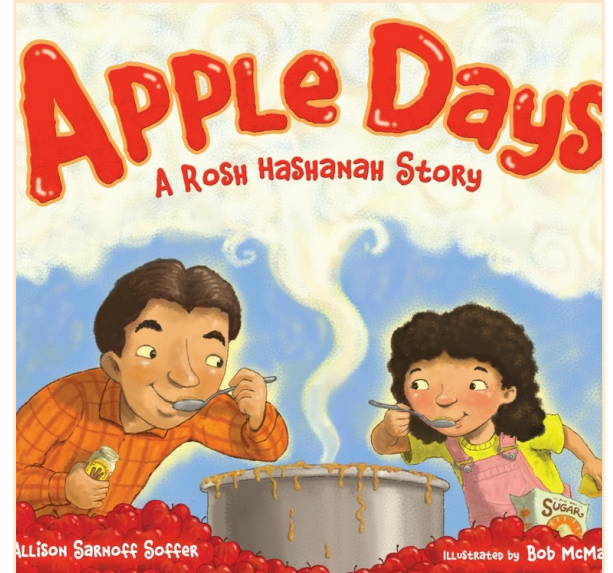
On Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year, it's customary to eat apples dipped in honey and say a blessing: "May we be renewed for a good and sweet year." There are lots of sweet treats, though. Why apples? It's partly timing: Apples are in season in early fall, which coincides with Rosh Hashanah. But according to Jewish mystical tradition, they might also be a symbol for "entering the apple orchard," a metaphor for standing in the divine presence. In this book, the customary apples have morphed into applesauce. And why not? That's a way of eating sweet apples that anyone can enjoy, even babies.

TALK IT OVER WITH YOUR KIDS

When Katy is disappointed, her mom tells her, "It's your job to be a big girl." What does she mean by that?

Why do you think so many people give Katy apples? How do you think it makes Katy feel?

Have you ever made homemade applesauce? What is your favorite Rosh Hashanah ritual?



HANDS ON!



Make Apple Cards

Many people send cards to their friends and families around Rosh Hashanah to wish them a happy new year. You can create apple stamps to make your own homemade cards.

Supplies

Apples
Forks
Paper plates
Acrylic paint
Fine-tipped marker
Heavy card stock



- 1 Cut apples in half. Any shape works, but if you cut them across the middle, you'll have a star.
- 2 Stick a fork in the back of the apple for a handle.
- 3 Spread paint out on a paper plate. Dip the apple in the paint, then stamp it on your card stock.
- 4 Let paint dry, then embellish with a little stem or leaf. Add a new year's message such as "Shana tovah — Happy New Year!"