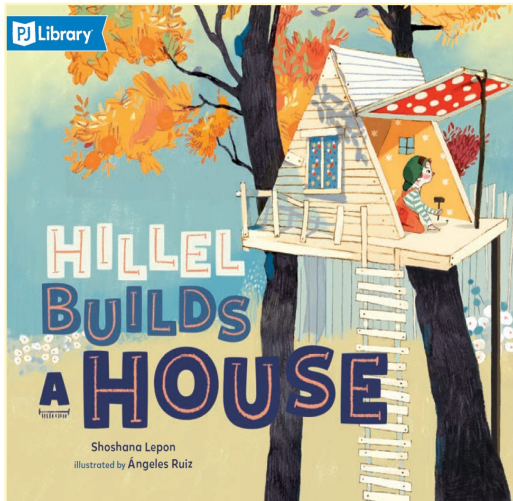


Hillel Builds a House

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What are you building?



HANDS ON!

Make Your Own House

Doesn't Hillel's house look like fun? You can make your own temporary house.

Supplies:

- Card table
- Large flat sheet (one you don't need anymore)
- Scissors
- Markers

Drape the old sheet over the card table. Use a marker to mark out where you'd like your door and window to be. Remove the sheet from the table and cut out the door and window (with a grown-up's help). You can use the markers to continue to decorate the sheet however you like, then place the sheet back over the card table. Welcome home!

<https://www.welke.nl/photo/ingridvanbael/lang-speelplezier-en-nog-mooi-ook.1357743612>

Worker's Holiday

Poor Hillel! Every time he builds a little house, something thwarts his plans — candles at Hanukkah, rain at Purim, pillows at Passover. Luckily, Sukkot is all about building a little house — a sukkah. Big enough to eat in (and even sleep in!), a sukkah often has openings in its sides and is topped with branches or other natural material (called s'khakh). This roof provides shelter without cutting us off from nature, letting in the elements — a bit of sun, a bit of rain, and, of course, the light of the moon and stars. To learn more, visit pjlibrary.org/hillelbuilt.

Welcome Home

Hillel loves his cozy little houses, but a home is more than a cozy spot — it's a space to connect with our community. When we move into a new house, it's traditional to put a mezuzah, a small box containing a prayer from the Bible, on the doorpost. We invite people to join us for this ritual, the first of many times in this new home when we will practice the Jewish value of welcoming guests (hachnasat orchim). Sometimes we welcome guests even before we have a physical shelter! At many Jewish weddings, guests crowd around the marrying couple to hold the chuppah (wedding canopy) over their heads. The chuppah symbolizes the future home the newlyweds will create as well as the unbreakable connection between house and community.

Open Door Policy

Our homes aren't usually as open to the elements as a chuppah or sukkah, but Jewish tradition emphasizes doorways over walls, reminding us to create welcoming spaces that promote connection and community, protection and peace. The Talmud (the core collection of rabbinic writing) says, "Your children will bring peace. Actually, don't call them 'children' (banim) — call them 'builders' (bonim)." Hillel is both a child and a builder, and he seems to understand that a good house is a place of peace. Hillel's family has built a place of freedom, adventure, ritual, and love — a safe base from which to go out and explore.

TALK IT OVER WITH YOUR KIDS

WHAT makes your home cozy?

HOW do you make a guest feel special in your home?

WHEN you are a guest in someone else's home, how do you behave?