

Pippa's Passover Plate

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How do you overcome fear?

Stepping up to the Plate

Pippa is anxious to find her seder plate! This is the centerpiece of the seder, a festive meal that kicks off Passover. A seder plate holds symbols of the Passover story. *Karpas* — a green vegetable, often parsley — is dipped in salt water to remind us of the tears of the enslaved Israelites. A sweet fruit paste called *charoset* (from the Hebrew word *cheres*, “clay”) is like the mortar that the Israelites used to construct buildings for the Egyptian empire. *Maror*, a bitter herb (usually horseradish), recalls the bitterness of slavery. It is sometimes joined by *hazeret*, a second bitter herb. A roasted lamb shank bone, *zeroah*, is a reminder of the offering the Jews made before leaving Egypt. Lastly, the *beitzah* — a roasted or hard-boiled egg — stands for the offering made on every holiday in the days when the Temple stood. That's one powerful centerpiece!

Ready, ~~Reset~~, Go!

Why did Pippa's seder plate go missing in the first place? Well, she doesn't use it every day. For many families, Passover involves a total reset: The everyday dishes, pots and pans, and utensils are switched out for sets reserved only for the holiday; houses are meticulously cleaned; and certain foods — *chametz* — are removed from the home. Chametz refers to all things leavened, like bread, cookies, and pasta. Saying no to chametz is part of the Exodus reenactment: When the Israelites fled Egypt, they left so quickly that there wasn't time for their bread to rise. Maybe matzah was the first “to go” food! To learn more visit pjlibrary.org/pippasplate.

Getting Egypt out of the Slave

But what is chametz, really? On a spiritual level, chametz represents negative character traits and habits — the parts of us that need work. Chametz can also be connected with fear and things that drag us down. Slaves still have to rid themselves of the inner effects of harsh and inhumane treatment after they are physically freed. In the same way, if we've cleaned our homes for Passover, we've only done half the work. The rest is about checking for chametz in our hearts and souls, and throwing out anything that is keeping us from being free. Pippa is afraid of cats, snakes, and owls (and as a little mouse, rightly so), but she perseveres through her fears in order to find her beloved seder plate. We can follow her example. Out with chametz and fear; in with freedom!

TALK IT OVER WITH YOUR KIDS

Why does Pippa want her Passover plate so much?

How do you help your family get ready for Passover?

How do you feel when your house is clean?
Does it feel different when it's messy?

What are you afraid of? What helps you get over that fear?

Pippa's Passover Plate



HANDS ON!



Create Your Own Seder Plate

Make a seder plate that's as special to you as Pippa's is to her.

Supplies:

Large paper plate
6 mini cupcake liners
Glue
Markers



Glue the cupcake liners around the edge of the paper plate. Use the markers to label each liner with the name of one of the seder plate items, and add colorful drawings around the rest of the plate (this is a celebration, after all). Fill the plate with the seder items and display proudly at your family's seder.