

# Who's Got the Etrog?

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## Why do we share?

### Home Sweet Sukkah

Sharing isn't always easy, as Auntie Sanyu finds out when her friends come to visit for *Sukkot*, the fall harvest festival. But sharing and Sukkot go hand in hand, as hospitality is an important part of the holiday. Enter the *sukkah*, a booth or hut modeled after the temporary wilderness dwellings that the ancient Israelites lived in thousands of years ago, traveling from the slavery of Egypt toward the freedom of Israel. For seven days, the *sukkah* is the place to be. People eat, sleep, and enjoy time with family and friends under its sparsely thatched roof. The impermanent, sometimes shaky *sukkah* is also a great reality check. When we set aside our attachment to our homes (and the stuff they hold), we can focus on what's most important: our loved ones, our community, and the world surrounding us.

### The Four Species

Warthog won't let go of the *etrog* (citron), and that's a problem. Along with the willow, palm, and myrtle branches that make up a *lulav*, the *etrog* is one of the Four Species, which are important Sukkot ritual objects. During Sukkot, it's customary to hold the *etrog* and *lulav* together and wave them to the north, south, east, and west, as well as up and down, symbolizing joy in the holiday, thankfulness for the harvest, and God's presence everywhere. Warthog simply has to share that *etrog*! Learn more at [pjlibrary.org/whosgottheetrog](http://pjlibrary.org/whosgottheetrog).

### Come On In, the Sukkah's Fine

Families can practice *hachnasat orchim* (Hebrew for "welcoming guests") by inviting someone into their *sukkah* for a meal—a way of sharing the bounty of the harvest. There's also a mystical tradition to invite a series of symbolic guests, the *ushpizin* (Aramaic for "guests"), into the *sukkah*. The traditional guest list is chock-full of revered biblical leaders: Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Aaron, and King David. Today many families also welcome a group of *ushpizot*: Sarah, Miriam, Deborah, Hannah, Abigail, Huldah, and Queen Esther. How's that for a heavenly party?

### Rain, Rain, DON'T Go Away

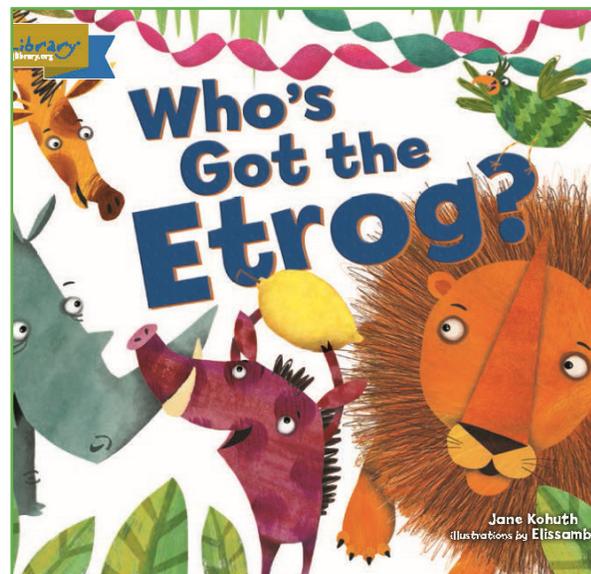
When rain is in the forecast, we might groan a little. But there is actually a day in the Jewish calendar when we ask for it! *Shemini Atzeret* (which literally means "eighth assembly" in Hebrew), a holiday immediately following the seven days of Sukkot, marks the beginning of the rainy season in Israel. On that day it is traditional to pray for the wet stuff—and lots of it—so that the plants and crops will thrive. We put aside our personal desire for sunny weather, knowing that with a little rain, everyone wins.

## TALK IT OVER WITH YOUR KIDS

**H**ow is a *sukkah* different from a house?

**H**ow do you feel when someone shares with you?

**W**hy do we need rain?



## HANDS ON!



## Make a Sukkah Fort



### Supplies

- Chairs
- Couch cushions
- Pillows
- Blankets or sheets
- Friends—humans, stuffed animals, dolls... anyone you like to hang out with!

Use the couch cushions, pillows, and blankets to make a fort-style *sukkah* right in your own living room. Make it big or small, as long as there is room for friends inside. Practice welcoming your guests by inviting them into the *sukkah*, making them comfortable, and offering them something to eat or drink. Before you put the pillows away, have a family picnic dinner inside your *sukkah*!