

Shabbat - שַׁבָּת



Shabbat is different from all of the other days of the week. The Torah (first five books of the Bible) teaches that “God blessed the seventh day and made it holy” [Genesis 2:3]. Nothing else from the Creation story is described as *kadosh*, a Hebrew word meaning holy, sanctified or separate. Abraham Joshua Heschel, an important theologian of the 20th century, describes Shabbat as a “palace in time.” Heschel felt that on Shabbat, one should not only rest, but try to enjoy every second, minute and hour of time. For many Jews, Shabbat is a day for being with friends and family. It’s a time for pausing from everyday work and taking part in relaxing activities such as reading, singing, meditating and taking walks.

All Shabbat, All the Time

Allow children to prepare for Shabbat any time by placing ritual objects into your dramatic play area. In addition to candlesticks and Kiddush cups, provide a white tablecloth and fancy dishes. The children may want to use sponges and buckets to clean up beforehand.

Preparing for Shabbat

Welcoming Shabbat, or *Kabbalat Shabbat*, has a particular order or *seder*. (This is the same word we use for the Passover meal or Seder.) You might create Shabbat sequencing cards for your manipulatives area, that take you through the Shabbat preparations, giving *tzedakah*, and making each of the *berakhot* or blessings leading up to the Shabbat meal. Use this guide for more ideas <http://pjfor.me/shabbat-guide> and check out this video of the Shabbat seder: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tx34ZkbHHyc>

What’s the Blog Deal?

The PJ Library Blog has tremendous resources for educators and families. (<http://pjlibrary.org/pj-blog/>) The videos lend an opportunity to laugh, reflect, and share with families and teachers. Reactions to *The Shabbat Puppy* video included plans for home/school projects using old family photos, and lots of comments from parents who watched the song with their children to try to guess the Yiddish words.

If You Bake It, They Will Come

Have you ever tried to bake a challah? Check out Lisa’s attempt inspired by *Beni’s Family Treasury*, plus lots of challah info on the PJ Library blog site. It’s always an adventure to try a new recipe, and children of all ages will love this one! <http://pjfor.me/making-challah>

