

Things Should Match

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What do you really need?

Well-Off (and Off-Grid)

Shmendrick and his family have no money, but they still feel “quite well off.” That’s because they take to heart a classic teaching from *Pirkei Avot* (*Ethics of the Ancestors*, an ancient rabbinic text): “Who is rich? Those who are happy with their lot.” Maybe part of the reason Shmendrick’s family is happy with their lot is because they create it. They grow their own food, make their own clothes, and provide their own fun. In an age when many of us are dependent on stores for our goods and on media for our recreation, this family is completely self-sustaining. Pretty impressive, Shmendrick!

A Matched Set

When a stranger wants to buy one of the family’s chickens, they are eager to oblige. Shmendrick’s family respects the stranger’s needs, but they also respect the chicken – that’s why they ask the stranger to promise to take good care of the bird. In one fell swoop, this family demonstrates two important Jewish values: *hachnasat orchim* (Hebrew for “welcoming the stranger”) and *tza’ar ba’alei chayim* (“caring for animals”). Speaking of Jewish values, you’ve heard of honoring your parents, right? Well, honoring kids is important, too. In this family, everyone’s opinions matter: parents, older kids, and younger kids. To learn more, visit

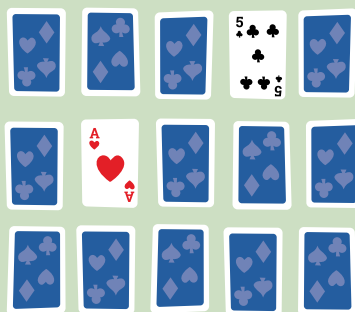
pjlibrary.org/thingsshouldmatch.

Shop Till You Drop?

Jewish teaching holds that performing a *mitzvah* (“commandment” or good deed) can inspire other people to do a *mitzvah*, too. This idea is referred to as *mitzvah goreret mitzvah*, Hebrew for “one mitzvah leads to another.” Turns out one *purchase* can lead to another, too. As Shmendrick’s family goes on their shopping spree, we might ask ourselves some questions. How much do we really need to buy? Are we being responsible to people who have less than we do? Judaism encourages us to carry our values with us at all times, even when we go shopping. Every action can help bring about the world we want to live in.

HANDS ON!

Play the Matching Game



Here’s a fun game that builds memory skills. Shuffle a deck of cards, then arrange the cards facedown in 4 rows of 13. Each player takes turns flipping over two cards (making sure all players have a chance to see them), then turning them facedown again. When players flip over two matching cards, they remove the cards from the table and then keep going until they flip over mismatched cards. When all the cards are gone, the player with the most matched sets wins – because after all, things should match!

TALK IT OVER WITH YOUR KIDS

WHY does this family care about their chicken? Do you have animals you care about?

THE store in this story claims, “We have everything you need and even things that you don’t.” What do you see at the store that you don’t need?

SHMENDRICK’S family starts and finishes this story with exactly the same stuff. How do they feel about this? How would you feel?