

Good Night, Laila Tov

written by
Laurel Snyder

illustrated by
Jui Ishida

How does the world talk to us?

Take Note

The family in this book does many things: visit the ocean, plant trees, hike in the fields, and of course, nap. More than that, though, the members of this family notice things. They find mice (and bees); they are aware of yellow light, sweet berries, and circling shadows; and they listen to the plip-plop of the rain and hear the waves whispering. By keeping their eyes and ears open, the characters in this simple story are doing an important thing. *Hakarat hatov*, Hebrew for “acknowledging the good,” is a fundamental Jewish value — and something everyone can do. Even babies and toddlers can enjoy the fragrance of pine, the warmth of sunshine, or the lullaby of a babbling brook. When we remain open to and aware of the many good things in our world, we feel more connected to it — and grateful for it. To learn more, visit pjlibrary.org/goodnightlailatov.

Is It Naptime Yet?

The refrain *laila tov* (Hebrew for “good night”) is repeated throughout this book, even when it’s clearly still day! That’s because the children in this book indulge in cozy naps, which they are able to enjoy anywhere because they know they are in their parents’ safe hands — even while they’re out in the wider world. When parents take kids on these kinds of outings, they’re providing them with new experiences while still cradling them in the security of family time. They’re also showing them how to care for loved ones, which is why when this family returns to home base, the kids step up and tuck their parents in for a *laila tov*.

Inhabited Planet

The story of Creation in Genesis, in which God is very busy acknowledging the good, tells us that we humans are the stewards of the earth, tasked with preserving and protecting our world. This directive is perhaps more significant today than ever. *Bal tashchit* (Hebrew for “do not destroy”) is an injunction against wastefulness and a commandment to preserve our earth. Originally a prohibition against cutting down fruit trees during wartime, today’s understanding of *bal tashchit* includes using things for their proper purpose and avoiding thoughtless overuse. Every day we have opportunities to safeguard nature, preserving the earth for our children — and theirs.

TALK IT OVER WITH YOUR KIDS

The children in this story see many animals. Which animals can you find in this book?

The family in this book says *laila tov* before going to sleep. What are some things you say before you go to sleep?

If you pay really close attention when you walk down the street, what things would you see that other people might miss?



HANDS ON!



Nap Outdoors

The family members in this book grab the opportunity for a little snooze wherever they happen to be — near the beach, in a meadow, even during a rainstorm. As this book demonstrates, you don’t have to go camping overnight to enjoy the pleasures of napping in the open air. It’s one of the great pleasures of a long summer day.

Supplies

Blanket
Shady spot
Tired kids



- 1 Let your kids run themselves ragged.
- 2 Spread the blanket under a tree or other shady spot.
- 3 Lie down with them and hush.
Laila tov — good night!