

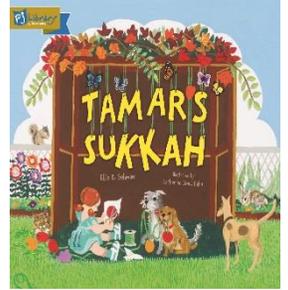
Read the PJ Library Book

Tamar's Sukkah (3s)

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Synopsis

Tamar's family has built their *sukkah* (a temporary booth) to celebrate *Sukkot*, the Jewish fall harvest festival, but something is missing. Tamar enlists the help of her friends and neighbors, each with their own talents and gifts, to fill her *sukkah* with beauty, prayer, food, and most importantly - friends. Tamar understands that her job is done and explains, "A *sukkah* full of friends is just right."

For more information on Sukkot visit us on the web at <http://pjfor.me/pjgts-sukkot-page>

Discuss the Jewish values and vocabulary with one another

Friendship - *ye-di-dut* - ידידות

Community - *ke-hi-la* - קהילה

Introducing the value of friendship

Yedidut

From Jewish teachings

A true friendship with someone means that we make them a priority in addition to showing respect. We read in *Ethics of Our Ancestors*, "Acquire for yourself a friend" (*Pirkei Avot* 1:6). This instruction stands out as a personal encouragement to cultivate a meaningful relationship between two people. It is significant to note that the Hebrew phrase is "K'nei lecha chaver," which literally means "buy yourself a friend." This shows the importance of sharing and compromise in developing friendships.

For the teacher

How have your own relationships with your friends impacted your life?
 How have your friendships changed as you've changed?
 What's the difference between friends, colleagues and acquaintances?
 What's the difference between classroom relationships and friendships?
 How do friendships affect working relationships?
 What do you want to teach children about friendship?

Questions for children

What are a few things you like about your friends?
 Have you ever learned something new from a friend?
 What makes a good friend?
 What makes you want to be friends with someone?
 What are ways that you can help your friends and ways that your friends can help you?
 Have you ever built or made something with a friend?
 How do you treat a friend when you are playing together?

Introducing the value of community *Kehillah*

From Jewish teachings

Community is at the root of much of Jewish tradition and practice. Many Jewish prayers are only said as part of a *minyan* (quorum of 10). Jewish writings have a common thread of kindness to all and aid to those in the community who need help. The idea that “it takes a village” is represented in *Ethics of our Ancestors* which cautions, “Do not separate yourself from the community” (*Pirkei Avot* 2:5). The worlds of community and home life collide at Sukkot. Jewish tradition suggests enriching your holiday experience by inviting guests to the sukkah, real and imagined, such as ancestors or famous people in history.

For the teacher

The community created in an early childhood classroom is the model from which our students will learn how important it is to value those around us. How will you create the *kehillah* of your classroom?
In what ways does your morning meeting routine foster community and engage all children at once, without presenting challenges for children unable to sit or not in the limelight?
How do you encourage conversation that is give and take, as opposed to each child responding to a single question?

Questions for children

Who are the people who are part of our community (in the school/synagogue/center)?
Who are people who are part of our greater community (in our city/town, etc.)?
Who are people who are part of our national/global community? How do we communicate with all of these people?
How do they make our lives better?
What would it be like to have to do all of the things that our community needs without the help of these other people?

Imagine your community living these Jewish values.

**How would your classroom change?
How will families be involved?**

In the Classroom / Centers

☆ **Yedidut/friendship:** In a **building/tools area** have children build something alone and then build something with a friend. Ask them which way is easier, faster, or more fun. Make the connection from building a sukkah to building a friendship, by encouraging students to work together to gather supplies for a classroom sukkah.

☆ **Yedidut/friendship:** Play friendship charades at **morning meeting**. Brainstorm how friends treat one another, such as say hello or share a snack. Write the students’ ideas on pieces of paper. Allow students to pick a paper, and with your help, act out the scene. Watch for how this play-acting permeates the class dynamic.



☆ **Kehillah/community:** Use **music** to show the importance of togetherness, by singing “*Hinei Mah Tov*” or “*Shalom Chaverim*.” Incorporate **dance and musical instruments** to meet the needs of those students who need to move more before doing quiet or focused activities.

☆ **Kehilla/community:** Map your town, and invite in members of community to talk about what they do as part of a **social studies project**. Include a tour of your school building. Interview school staff about their responsibilities.



Bridging Home and School

Celebration Conundrum

Does your school have rules about birthday parties? It's often a tricky area. Create an opportunity, perhaps an early morning coffee, to discuss the birthday dilemma with parents. Perhaps they will come up with a community-building way to celebrate birthdays that everyone will enjoy.



Sukkah Crawl

Sukkot is a wonderful time to come together outside of the classroom. Leading up to the holiday, ask families if they are planning to build a sukkah at home. Families may be willing to be part of a sukkah crawl, where you visit one sukkah for snacks, one for dinner and one for dessert. Leading up to this event you can learn together

about what we do when we visit our friends at home. Alternatively, you can have a sukkah crawl in the classroom of your school. Invite families to help prepare the food and decorations. Make sure to take lots of pictures!

Family Engagement at Home

Community Connection

How has the community contributed to your life at home? Did friends help you put together furniture? Did family bring food over when your children were born? Take a tour of your house with your children and point out all the things that wouldn't have been possible without your community.

Share your stories and experiences with everyone.

What happened?

How can the learning go deeper?

Tell us a story... about developing friendships.

How have the relationships in your class changed since the beginning of the year? As the children are moving from parallel to cooperative play, how have you noticed the atmosphere of your classroom changing? Take pictures and record anecdotal evidence to show the bonds that are being built in your class. Make sure to alert parents about who their children spend time with in the class so that those relationships can be cultivated at home as well. Encourage playdates amongst the students in your classroom. As their relationships blossom outside of the classroom, you will see the community strengthening.



More resources and websites for inspiration

Sukkot Pinterest pages: <http://pjfor.me/pp-pinterest-sukkot>; <http://pjfor.me/pjgts-pinterest-sukkot>

Family friendly article: <http://pjfor.me/kveller-sukkot>

Sukkot infographic: <http://pjfor.me/sukkot-infographic>

