

Kehillot haOlam:
Experiencing the
World Through
the Jewish
Holidays

A Curriculum Guide by
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EDUCATIONAL RATIONALE

“The Jewishness we are transmitting is a living thing. We reshape it as we transmit it. Our children see us rethinking, reacting to what affects us as Jews and as American Jews, learning a kind of fluidity and cultural authority that belongs to transmitters.”¹ This powerful quote by Dr. Rachel Adler reminds us that our current Jewish identity as we know it, is only one stop along a life-long Jewish journey. It is not stagnant, but rather an ever-changing voyage as a result of our exposure to various practices and traditions. As the drivers of this journey, we have the ability to pick and choose how we want to live as Jews in ways that feel authentic to our beliefs and values. And yet, how do we do that when we have limited resources to do so?

Today’s Jewish community is more diverse than ever. Organizations such as Be’Chol Lashon and the URJ’s Jew V’Nation Fellowship are just two programs that strive to make our Jewish community more racially, culturally, and ethnically inclusive. Despite these programs’ existence, there is still a disconnect between these Jewish initiatives and the content we are teaching. Students continue to feel alienated because they do not see themselves, or who they hope to become, in the Jewish stories we are telling. How can we truly understand the unique diversity of *Kehillot haOlam*, the vastness of the Jewish communities of the world, with the Ashkenormative rhetoric that is so prevalent in today’s Jewish educational spaces? In her article *I am Jewish AND...*, Sasha Dominguez states,

“As Jews in the United States today, we all hold complex identities. Jewish educational and institutional leaders ought to present their plethora of experiences and identities to their constituents as well...We must step up and

¹ Vincent Cheng, *Inauthentic: The Anxiety Over Culture and Identity* (New Brunswick, New Jersey, and London: Rutgers University Press, 2004), 180

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educate the entire Jewish narrative. Only then can we create a stronger Jewish community, empowering the Jewish future to serve the world with justice and acts of kindness and compassion.”²

Kehillot haOlam: Experiencing the World through the Jewish Holidays brings to life the extensive array of global Jewish narratives and traditions as a means of adding texture to the students’ own Jewish practices and perspectives. This exploration of global Jewish culture seeks to broaden the students’ own sense of Judaism through experimentation with practices outside of their family or community experience. This curriculum will explore the following Enduring Understandings:

1. Jews all over the world own their unique Jewish customs and traditions regarding the Jewish holidays.
2. A person’s Jewish identity influences the trajectory of their ever- evolving journey.
3. Exposure to diverse Jewish practices and cultures enhances individual Jewish identity and expression.

Designed for high school students in a congregational religious school or day school setting, this curriculum examines the ways in which the Jewish Holidays are celebrated in Jewish communities around the world. Students will explore how these various unique practices came to be while surveying the historical context of each community. In doing so, students will journey through the multiplicity of Jewish food, music, and religious customs in these places, in hopes of incorporating some of these new ideas into their own Jewish journey.

² Dominguez, S. (2019, March 14). I am Jewish AND... [Web log post]. Retrieved October 13, 2019, from <https://ejewishphilanthropy.com/i-am-jewish-and/>

EDUCATIONAL RATIONALE

Parallel to most 10th grade Social Studies curricula, *Kehillot haOlam: Experiencing the World through the Jewish Holidays* recognizes that high school students are mature enough to understand how different customs can show different world views. As they seek to become independent young adults, Jewish teens are looking to broaden their horizons and create a toolbox of diverse perspectives to draw upon. In his research titled *Generation Now: Understanding and Engaging Jewish Teens Today*, Dr. David Bryfman identified that Jewish teens today, “look for guidance and ways to connect to each other, themselves, and to a higher sense of purpose and meaning. They respect experiences that help guide their lives.”³ This curriculum is a global guidebook for teenage Jewish life; rich with a myriad of ways for teens to experience diverse Jewish viewpoints that will add flavor to their own Jewish journey.

In the popular song “Wherever You Go” by Larry Milder, we learn that “Some Jews wear hats, and some Jews wear sombreros. And some wear kafiyahs to keep out the sun... Some Jews live on rice, and some live on potatoes, or waffles, falafels, or hamburger buns.”⁴ It is time to discover who these “some Jews” actually are and how their practices can inform our ever-changing Jewish journey.

³ Bryfman, D. (n.d.). Generation now. Retrieved October 15, 2019, from <https://www.jewishedproject.org/resources/generation-now>

⁴ Larry Milder, “Wherever You Go,” in *The Complete Shireinu*, ed. Joel Eglash et al. (New York: Transcontinental Music Productions, 2001), 215.

LETTER TO THE EDUCATOR

Dear Educator,

Thank you for using this curriculum for the students in your community. Like me, you understand how important it is for our students to have a broader understanding of Jewish life beyond their immediate community. You and your students are about to embark upon a journey that will take you near and far, to Jewish communities around the globe! This curriculum guide is meant to help you navigate your way through these communities as you and your students study their unique histories, foods, and special holiday customs.

What do I need to know in order to teach this curriculum?

It is important that you know a little about your student's background. For example, if you have a large Persian population in your class, you may want to adjust the lessons that mention Persian Jews accordingly. There may also be an opportunity to bring in students' relatives to teach some of these customs to the class. The more authentic, the better!

Before you cook anything, please note any student allergies that are in your class. Feel free to adjust recipes accordingly or eliminate dishes all together. The curriculum is designed so that even if you eliminated all of the recipes, it would still be a very content-rich curriculum.

Each lesson is designed to be about an hour and half. The lessons with a lot of cooking could be even longer. One way to cut the time is to do some prep-work ahead of time. If veggies need to be chopped, see if you can do that before class. If dough needs to be made in order to rise for an hour, do that the day prior. It is for this reason that I often suggest having groups of students cooking different dishes, as opposed to one after the other.

Students, even 10th graders, have a range of comfortability in the kitchen. It may be helpful to do a quick "cooking 101" session that includes some basic tips: how to hold a knife, how to communicate with many cooks in the kitchen, how to properly wash your hands prior to food prep, how to use kitchen appliances, etc.

This curriculum assumes that students have some prior knowledge about each of the holidays. I have included quick review's as set inductions when necessary.

What supplies do I need?

It is no surprise that Jewish holidays are very food focused. You will see that many of the lesson include cooking various items as a class. Most ingredients are easily found at any grocery store, but I have specified when you will need to order something ahead of time (often with a link from Amazon.) Because it can take time to retrieve some of these supplies, I suggest always looking 2-3 sessions ahead of all times so that you have ample time to shop. This looking ahead will also be helpful when it comes to prepping supplies.

LETTER TO THE EDUCATOR

A few of the recipes require that dough be made ahead of time so that it has time to rise. You will want to think these steps through before coming to class.

It is important that you have regular access to a kitchen that can fit your entire class. Many of the lessons have the students cooking different items concurrently in groups, so space is important. In general, you should have access to an oven, stove, pots and pans, food processor, cutting boards, knives, mixing bowls.

Since you and your students will be “traveling” around the Jewish world it is important to have a map on hand for every class. In Lesson 1 of the Background Unit I suggest that you buy a scratch off map so that students can scratch off countries as you learn about them. This can help them remember where they have been in the world.

What is the structure of units and lessons in this curriculum?

You will see in the Table of Contents and in my Scope and Sequence that we will be exploring the global Jewish community through six units: Background, Rosh Hashanah, Sukkot / Simchat Torah, Hanukkah, Purim and Passover. In a perfect world, the Background Unit would happen first, and the others would follow as the Jewish year continues. That said, I realize that some Religious Schools begin around Rosh Hashanah, so you might want to teach some of those lessons alongside the holiday. Feel free to do that! This curriculum guide is meant to serve as just that, a guide. Please make it your own –adapt to fit your needs and the needs of your students.

In terms of the lessons within each unit, they can be taught in whatever order would be most meaningful for you and your students. The most important part is the set induction that occurs at the beginning of each unit which serves as a general review for each holiday. I feel it is important review what the students know about each holiday before diving into the unique ways that communities around the world differ from their understanding. Aside from that, the lessons do necessarily build upon one another.

How is learning assessed?

Each unit ends with a lesson that is dedicated to Authentic Assessment. How that Authentic Assessment looks is entirely up to you and/or the students. You will see I have provided a list of options, some of which repeat and some of which are unique to a specific holiday. My vision was for the student to decide, at the beginning of each unit, what their Authentic Assessment would be at the end. It is important that they decide at the beginning because some of the options require that they collect data as the lessons are being taught. That said, if you want to narrow their options in any way, go for it! I also thought it would be important that the teens chose a different mode of Authentic Assessment for each unit, however that is ultimately up to you.

The day itself can look any number of ways, which I have explained in the lesson itself. That day can be spent presenting their assessment projects or preparing items to be presented at another time. That could be at a Shabbat service, during Shabbat oneg, or a stand-alone event. Parents can be invited or no. Again, this is up to you!

LETTER TO THE EDUCATOR

At the end of the year the students are asked to do a final assessment by creating a Multi-Cultural Guide for the synagogue to use. You will find more information about this in the Concluding Lesson. Like the Authentic Assessments within each unit, there is a lot of flexibility in regard to what this looks like. Ultimately, the teens should have a say so I suggest really taking the time to make sure it is something that is both meaningful for the teens and useful for the synagogue. That lesson itself will need to be broken up amongst two days at least, possibly more depending on your group. Please keep that in mind as you work through the curriculum.

I hope this curriculum serves as a rich supplement to your 10th Grade learning experience. I hope it challenges them in meaningful ways and encourages them to explore the global Jewish community further. May it broaden their understand of the Jewish holidays and enhance their own Jewish practice in ways that feel authentic to them.

Nesiya Tova! Have a wonderful journey!

Michelle Blumenthal

SCOPE AND SEQUENCE

INTRODUCTORY LESSON

This lesson sets the tone for the rest of the curriculum. It will provide space for students to discuss their current Jewish identity and how the rest of the curriculum can help enhance their Jewish practices through holiday rituals around the world.

UNIT 1: BACKGROUND

This unit will provide a historical overview of the various Jewish communities we will explore. It will compare Ashkenazi Jewry with Sephardic Jewry, delve deeper into various origins of Sephardic Jews, and explore how Mizrahi Jews fit into this diverse tapestry of The Jewish People. Students will create a graphic organizer that they can refer to throughout the rest of the curriculum to remind themselves of these communities' origins. This unit will end with an authentic assessment that synthesizes the information learned.

UNIT 2: ROSH HASHANAH

This unit will explore traditions around the Rosh Hashanah Seder. Similar to the Passover Seder, each Rosh Hashanah Seder involves eating an array of symbolic foods in a particular order. Students will learn about Rosh Hashanah Sedarim from India, Morocco, Iran, and Turkey. Students will also explore the diversity of shofarot used around the world. This unit will end with an authentic assessment that synthesizes the information learned.

UNIT 3: SUKKOT AND SIMCHAT TORAH

This unit will explore Ethiopian, Indian and Moroccan traditions around Sukkot and Simchat Torah. The Ethiopian Sigd symbolizes the acceptance of the Torah, similar to the way many Jews understand Simchat Torah. The Bene Israel Jews of India called the fourth day of the new year Khiricha San (the holiday of khir, a pudding made with coconut milk, sweets, and nuts). Moroccan Jews decorate their sukkot with hanging rugs and a special "Elijah's Cup," as well as decorate their lulav with silk ribbons and bells. This unit will end with an authentic assessment that synthesizes the information learned.

UNIT 4: HANUKKAH (Scripted Unit)

This unit will explore various customs around Hanukkah. Students will compare three different types of Latkes: Indian Kanda Bhaji, Mexican Bunuelos, and Korean "Paj-kes." Students will compare three different kinds of Jelly Doughnuts: Moroccan Sfenj, Greek bimuelos, and Israeli Sufganiyot. Yemenite Jews celebrate Women in Jewish text on Hanukkah, especially Hannah and Judith. Turkish Jews celebrate Hanukkah by singing their traditional "Ocho Candelikas" song which is in Ladino. This unit will end with an authentic assessment that synthesizes the information learned.

SCOPE AND SEQUENCE

UNIT 5: PURIM

This unit will explore various customs around Purim. Moroccan Jews bake bread which includes two hard boiled eggs, representing Haman’s eyes. Yemenite Jewish children make a wooden effigy to symbolize Haman. Baghdadi Jews write Haman on a piece of paper and erase it with wine. Some Mexican Jews used to create a “Saint Esther” figure to celebrate Esther’s bravery during Purim. This unit will end with an authentic assessment that synthesizes the information learned.

UNIT 6: PASSOVER

This unit will explore various customs around Passover. Ethiopian Jews break their dishes to commemorate their past and celebrate renewal. Students will compare Indian Matzo (*bakri*) with Mexican Matzo (*Pan de Semita*). Moroccan Jews end Passover with a festive Mimouna celebration. Iranian Jews hit each other with green onions and leeks during Dayenu. Yemenite Jews have a giant egg feast during Passover. This unit will end with an authentic assessment that synthesizes the information learned.

**INTRODUCTORY
LESSON:
My Jewish &'s**

Kehillot haOlam: Introduction

My Jewish &'s

Goals

- To set a foundation for the rest of the curriculum.
- To clarify that one's Jewish identity is an ever-evolving journey.

Essential Questions

- What are ways in which my multiple identities play a role in my life?
- How can learning about Jewish traditions around the world enhance my own Jewish practice?

Objectives (*Students will be able to...*)

- Map aspects of their Jewish identity.
- Explain how their Jewish identity is an ever-evolving journey.
- Articulate how their multiple identities play a role in their lives.

Supplies:

- White computer paper, 2 per student
- Pens, 1 per student

Other Things to Prepare:

- Copies of *Appendix A: Words Matter*, 1 per student

Kehillot haOlam: Introduction

My Jewish &'s

Set Induction

(10 minutes)

Have students create an identity map. Begin by writing their name in the middle of a piece of paper. Then write aspects of their identity around it. Encourage them to write as many items as they can (about 20). If they need further guidance, they can also think about different roles they play in their lives or nouns they would use to describe themselves. Examples include but are not limited to:

- Religion
- Race
- Ethnicity / Culture
- Hobbies/interests
- Family relations
- Gender
- Sexual Orientation

Activity 1: Identity Map

(15 minutes)

When they are done, have them turn to a partner to describe the characteristics mentioned on their map and answer the following questions:

- ❓ How does Judaism interact with other parts of your identity? Is that easy or difficult?
- ❓ Which of these aspects of your identity are more prevalent in your life?
- ❓ Is there ever a time when certain aspects of your identity are in conflict with one another? Explain one instance where that happened.

Have each student list their top 3 characteristics on the board. If there are repeats, put a check mark by them.

Activity 2: How are we similar and how are we different?

(5 minutes)

Begin by asking the students to reflect on the ways in which they are similar (i.e. whichever characteristics had check marks) and the ways in which they are different. Explain that while we are all unique in many ways, there are also fundamental aspects of their identities that are similar. Those similarities connect us, even when we do not realize it.

If they were to do this with Jews their age from another country, there would be characteristics that are similar, while also some differences between them.

Kehillot haOlam: Introduction

My Jewish &'s

- 🕒 Imagine that you are meeting a Jewish teen from another country. Would you be surprised to find out they shared a love for a certain band or hobbies? Why or why not?

Activity 3: Complexities of Identity

(15 minutes)

Someone's identity is a complex phenomenon. Explain that up until now they have been talking about themselves as *they* see them. What this does not always account for is how *others* see them. Sometimes other people place labels on us that we did not choose for ourselves. The environment in which we live plays an important role in either supporting or undermining aspects of your identity. Other people may assume things about us that are untrue, and thus mislabel who we are.

Pass out copies of *Appendix A: Words Matter*. Read together as a class and then answer the following questions:

- 🕒 What do you think the word Indian meant to the kids in Niin's class? What factors might have shaped her classmates' understanding of the word?
- 🕒 Why do you think Niin's mother told Niin she was Canadian? What did she want Niin to understand about herself?
- 🕒 Considering the rest of the story, what might Niin's mother have wanted Niin's classmates to learn?
- 🕒 Do you have a memory of becoming aware of differences? If so, what was it?

Activity 4: Identity as a Journey

(15 minutes)

Explain that what they noted about themselves in their identity chart, is only a reflect of their *current* identity in that moment. Had they been asked to do this activity a year ago, it could reflect *some* different aspects of their identity.

Ask students to think about where they want to be in 5 years. Have them do another identity chart that shows what aspects of their identity they hope to embody in 5 years' time.

- 🕒 What is different about this chart compared to your first chart?
- 🕒 What characteristics remained the same from the first chart?
- 🕒 Why do you think these two charts would have to be different in some way?

Kehillot haOlam: Introduction

My Jewish &'s

Explain that someone's identity is something that evolves throughout their lives to reflect the diverse experiences they encounter. As a result, our identities are actually journeys. They are not stagnant, but rather remain fluid for the rest of our lives.

Closure

(5 minutes)

Explain that this year they will be exploring the myriad of ways that Jewish holidays are celebrated around the world. In doing so, they will get to explore how people's multiple identities effect the ways in which they practice this aspect of Judaism. We will refer to this as their "Jewish &'s" because as they will see, many of the stories they read will involve the tension between them being "Jewish &" something else (i.e., Jewish and Korean) and how that affects their Jewish practice around a particular holiday.

As they explore these diverse Jewish practices, they will have multiple experience which have the potential to impact their current Jewish identity. They may encounter a holiday practice that speaks to them, and they may choose to adopt that practice the next time that holiday comes around. This is part of the journey!

Before students leave for the day, have students share one or two of their "Jewish &'s" with the rest of the group. They can refer to their first identity map for inspiration.

Words Matter ⁵

How does it feel to be called by a name you did not choose for yourself? Over time, people have used a long list of names for the Indigenous Peoples of the Americas, but those words have rarely been what they would call themselves.

The power and meaning of labels comes not only from the choice of words but also from how those words are said. Niin, an Anishinaabe woman of both Cree and Ojibway descent, talked in an interview about the first time in her childhood when someone called her an “Indian.”

I’m not sure whether I was in grade one or in grade two; actually I think it was in kindergarten, because my Mom was home at that time. I remember being outside for recess. You know, everyone was running around, playing in the middle of the field. All of a sudden I stopped because I realized that a few of the kids who were in my classroom had formed a circle around me. They were going around and around the circle and I realized I was in the middle of this circle. I was trying to figure out what the heck is going on here? They were saying something and I started listening to them. They were saying “Indian, Indian, Indian.” And I was like what? I really didn’t understand myself, first and foremost, as an “Indian.” Right in the middle of when they were doing that, the bell rang and everybody just turned toward the door and started walking in. I remember looking down on the ground wondering, what are they talking about Indian, Indian, Indian? I don’t even know how that circle formed in the first place. I didn’t catch it. It just seemed all of a sudden they were all around me and I just stopped, looking at them all. The bell rang right away. I just remember putting my head down, walking, looking at the grass, I was really thinking about, what was that all about? I didn’t even remember it by the time we got to the door. Except for when I got home I asked my Mom.

I remember when I went home, my mother was standing at the counter. She was baking something or other but she was working at the counter and I just walked up to her and I was watching what she was doing. I remember my chin barely touched the counter and I was watching her. I said, “Mom, what am I?” And she looked down at me and said really fast, “Were people asking you what you were?” I said, “Yes, they were calling me Indian.” She said, “Tell them you’re Canadian.” I couldn’t really figure out why she was sounding so stern and kind of angry. I just thought okay and I turned around but I remember that afternoon really clearly. I think why it stuck in my mind so much is because they were in a circle ridiculing me. And I don’t even know. I didn’t even take offence because I didn’t know what they were doing. Even though they were calling me Indian, I was still going yeah, so what? So it always puzzled me about why, why they were calling me Indian. And because I didn’t really feel any different from them, even

⁵ <https://www.facinghistory.org/holocaust-and-human-behavior/chapter-1/words-matter>

Introduction Lesson: My Jewish &'s

Appendix A

though I knew my skin was darker, my hair was brown, and I had a shinier face. I really didn't feel any different from them or feel I was different from them.

I just felt we were all just kids. I think that's when I started learning that there were different kinds of people. I knew that there were different kinds of people by just looking and seeing like different looking people but not people who are different from one another.

UNIT 1: BACKGROUND

Kehillot haOlam: Background

Lesson 1: Ashkenazi & Sephardi Jews

Goals

- To help students understand the difference between Ashkenazi and Sephardi Jewish background.
- To clarify which countries around the world have or had Jews that fall into the category of “Ashkenazi” or “Sephardi” origin.
- To provide a broader historical and cultural perspective of the communities the students will explore throughout the curriculum.

Essential Questions

- What are the unique ways that Ashkenazi Jews connect to Judaism?
- What are the unique ways that Sephardi Jews connect to Judaism?

Objectives (*Students will be able to...*)

- Define the terms “Ashkenazi” and “Sephardi.”
- Compare and contrast the history of Ashkenazi and Sephardi Jews.
- Articulate 5 ways that Ashkenazi Jews and Sephardi Jews are different.
- Articulate 5 ways that Ashkenazi Jews and Sephardi Jews are similar.

Supplies:

- Pens, 1 per student
- Highlighters, 1 for every two students
- Computer with sound and internet
- Projector
- Index cards, 2 per student
- Shoebox
- Scissors
- Wrapping paper
- Tape
- Thick Sharpie
- Scratch off map

Other Things to Prepare:

- Copies of Appendix A: Ashkenazi and Sephardi Jews Graphic Organizer, 1 per student
- Copies of Appendix B: Ashkenazi and Sephardi Jewish History, 1 per student
- Copies of Appendix C: Map of Jewish Ethnic Origin, in color, 1 per student
- Load the YouTube Video, “Modi on the differences between Ashkenazi and Sephardi Jews” on a computer.
 - Here is the link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fxjg2ER_PYM

Kehillot haOlam: Background

Lesson 1: Ashkenazi & Sephardi Jews

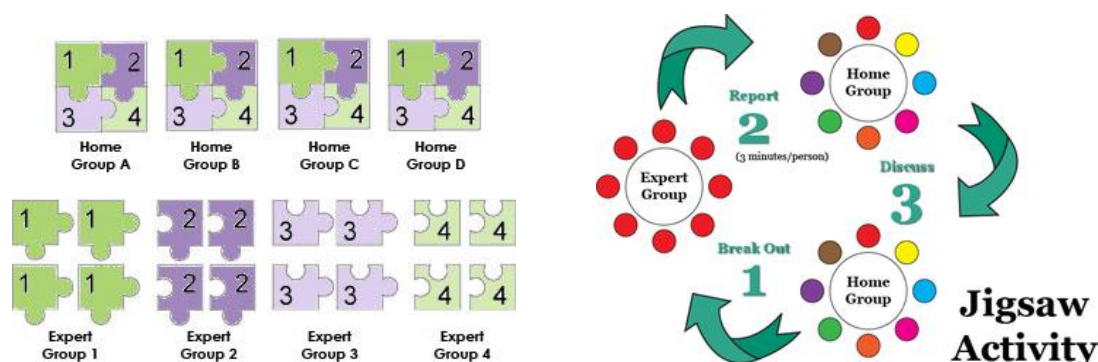
- Cut a hole into the shoebox so students can put any questions that they have regarding the material. Cover it with wrapping paper and label it as “Question Box” with a thick sharpie.
- Buy scratch off map from Amazon:
 - Here is an example: https://www.amazon.com/Large-Scratch-Off-World-Flags/dp/Bo7ZTBRHYF/ref=sr_1_10?keywords=map+scratch+off&qid=1580879647&sr=8-10
- Hang scratch off map somewhere in the classroom

Note to the Educator:

Throughout the rest of the curriculum, the students will explore how Jewish holidays are celebrated in Jewish communities all over the world. This Background Unit provides important context that will orient the students with who these people are, where they came from, how they settled there, and why their Jewish customs are uniquely diverse. Please use the map as much as possible to orient students on where you are discussing.

This lesson and the following lesson are designed as Jigsaws. A Jigsaw lesson is one where start with heterogeneous groups of students, divide them into new groups to become expert on a topic, and then returning them to their home groups to report what they learned.

Here are a couple images to help you visualize how this could work:



Also, remind students to bring their phones and/or a computer to next week’s lesson.

Kehillot haOlam: Background

Lesson 1: Ashkenazi & Sephardi Jews

Set Induction

(10 minutes)

Brainstorm some common Jewish words that are not in Hebrew. Another way to think about this is to think about words that their grandparents might use or might have used. Depending on your students' background, this could be words in Yiddish, Farsi/Persian, Ladino, or any other language. Make a list on the board.

Yiddish examples might include:

- *Schlep* – to carry something awkward or heavy
- *Mensch* – a good person of dignity and honor
- *Kvetch* – to complain
- *Kvell* – feeling happy and proud
- *Shvitz* – to sweat

Farsi examples might include:

- *halet chetore* - How are you?
- *salâmati!* - Cheers!
- *jigar* or *Jeegerato Bokhoram*- literally means “liver” or “I will eat your liver” but is an endearing term for “love” or “darling.”
- *Ghorbanat Beram* – literally means “may I be sacrificed for you” but is also a term of endearment.

Ladino examples might include:

- *ha-BEAR-es BWE-nos* - Good news!
- *dez-ma-zal-A-do de MEE* - Pity me! I'm out of luck.
- *HAD-ras ee bar-an-AS* - An outrageously big fuss. Being pretentious and really noisy at the same time.

As they go through, define what each term means.

🕒 Did you grow up hearing any of these terms at home?

🕒 Who was saying these words and to whom? What was the context?

Explain that Jews come from all over the world, and thus speak a variety of languages. Some Yiddish words have made it into our everyday vernacular (i.e. *schlep*) while other words are mostly heard within the family. Each of these words have a fascinating history behind their origin.

Explain that Yiddish is a mix of Hebrew and German, and it was spoken by the Jews of Eastern Europe. It is considered a dying language because very few Jews speak it on a daily basis. Jews from Eastern Europe are also called “Ashkenazi” Jews. Ladino is also called Judeo-Spanish or Sephardi, and it is spoken by Sephardi Jews living mostly in

Kehillot haOlam: Background

Lesson 1: Ashkenazi & Sephardi Jews

Spain, the Balkans, North Africa, Greece, and Turkey. It too is a dying language for similar reasons. Farsi or Persian is a western Iranian language, and it is spoken predominantly by the Jews of Iran, Afghanistan and Tajikistan. Jews from this region are called “Mizrahi” Jews.

Show areas on the map as you discuss each of these groups. Explain that you will scratch countries off as you discuss them throughout the year.

Today we are going to explore the history and background of the Ashkenazi and Sephardi Jews. We will explore the Mizrahi Jews in two weeks. While they each speak different languages, they also have distinct immigration stories, histories, and thus have adopted unique Jewish customs.

- 🕒 Does anyone know if your family is of Ashkenazi origin? Where are they from?
- 🕒 Does anyone know if your family is of Sephardi origin? Where are they from?

To help the students organize their thoughts, pass out *Appendix A: Ashkenazi & Sephardi Jews Graphic Organizer*.

Activity 1: Who are the Ashkenazi and Sephardi Jews? (25 minutes)

This is a mini-jigsaw activity. Instruct each student to find a partner. Assign each pair to read about either Ashkenazi Jews or Sephardi Jews using *Appendix B: Ashkenazi and Sephardi Jewish History*, while filling out the chart on *Appendix A: Ashkenazi and Sephardi Jews Graphic Organizer*. Hand out highlighters to each pair so that they can highlight certain areas of the reading if they choose. Explain that they should leave the “Similarities” section blank because you will do that part as a class.

Activity 2: Completing the Graphic Organizer (15 minutes)

This is the second part of the jigsaw activity. Once students have researched either Ashkenazi or Sephardi Jews as a pair, instruct them to find another pair that worked on the opposite topic. In other words, a pair that researched Ashkenazi Jews should be with a pair that researched Sephardi Jews. Their job is to teach the other pair about their topic, filling in the chart as they go along. If any discussions come up about similarities, they can start adding them to the “Similarities” section.

Activity 3: What is similar about Ashkenazi and Sephardi Jews? (10 minutes)

Once the pairs have finished teaching one another, bring the group back together to fill in the “Similarities” section of the chart. Examples include but are not limited to:

Kehillot haOlam: Background

Lesson 1: Ashkenazi & Sephardi Jews

- Both experienced persecution and anti-Semitism at various points throughout history
- Both had times where they lived separate from and together with the rest of society
- Language played an important role throughout history
- Both areas were victims of the Holocaust
- Both created their own court systems
- Both were forced to convert at various points in history
- Both immigrated to various countries to escape persecution
- Both follow the Babylonian Talmud and the *Shulkhan Arukh*

Explain to the students that you will refer to this graphic organizer through the year to remind them of the origins of the communities that they explore.

Activity 4: Comedy Routine about Ashkenazi and Sephardi Jews (15 minutes)

With their full graphic organizers in front of them, have them watch the following video: “Modi on the differences between Ashkenazi and Sephardi Jews”

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fxjg2ER_PYM

Then discuss the following questions:

- Ⓜ What can we learn about Ashkenazi and Sephardi Jews from this video?
- Ⓜ What aspects of these videos are represented in your graphic organizer in some way?

Closure (5 minutes)

Hand out 1 index card to each student. Instruct them to write a question that they have regarding Ashkenazi or Sephardi Jews.

This is only one of the background lessons in this unit, and it is just scratching the surface. Since there is more to explore, use this opportunity to take an inventory of questions that the students have regarding Ashkenazi and Sephardi Jews. Students can get more index cards if they have more questions. They can put their name of on them or write them anonymously. Collect the index cards at the end of class and store them somewhere safe so that they are ready for the next session.

Ashkenazi and Sephardi Jews Graphic Organizer

	ASHKENAZI	SEPHARDI
Etymology		
Countries of Origin		
Common Language(s)		
Common Profession(s)		
How were they treated in society?		
Influential Figures		

Background Lesson 1: Ashkenazi & Sephardi Jews

Appendix A

Characteristics of Jewish Life		
Immigration Story(s)		
Significant Dates / Events		
Religious Customs		
Anything else noteworthy?		

SIMILARITIES

--

Ashkenazi Jews ⁶

Ashkenaz (Heb. אַשְׁכְּנַז) was applied in the Middle Ages to Jews living along the Rhine River in northern France and western Germany. The center of Ashkenazi Jews later spread to Poland-Lithuania and now there are Ashkenazi settlements all over the world. The term "Ashkenaz" became identified primarily with German customs and descendants of German Jews.

In the 10th and 11th century, the first Ashkenazim, Jewish merchants in France and Germany, were economic pioneers, treated well because of their trading connections with the Mediterranean and the East. Jewish communities appeared in many urban centers. Early Ashkenaz communities were small and homogeneous. Until Christian guilds were formed, Jews were craftsmen and artisans. In France, many Jews owned vineyards and made wine. They carried arms and knew how to use them in self-defense. The Jews of each town constituted an independent, self-governing entity. Each community established its own regulations made up by an elected board and judicial courts. They enforced their rulings with the threat of excommunication. The Ashkenazim generally shied away from outside influences and concentrated on internal Jewish sources, ideas and customs. While Ashkenazi Jews occasionally experience anti-Semitism, mob violence first erupted against them at the end of the 11th century. Many were willing to die as martyrs rather than convert.

Ashkenazim focused on biblical and Talmudic studies. Centers of rabbinic scholarship appeared in the tenth century and centered around oral discussion. Sages focused on understanding the minutiae of the texts instead of extracting general principles. The most famous early teacher was Rabbenu Gershom of Mainz. Some of his decrees, such as that forbidding polygamy, are still in existence today. The first major Ashkenazi literary figure was Rashi (Solomon ben Isaac of Troyes, 1040-1105), whose commentaries on the Bible and Talmud are today considered fundamental to Jewish study. The tosafists, Ashkenazi Talmudic scholars in northern France and Germany, introduced new methods and insights into Talmudic study that are also still in use. Early Ashkenazi Jews composed religious poetry modeled after the fifth and sixth century piyyutim (liturgical poems).

In the 12th and 13th centuries, many Ashkenazi Jews became moneylenders. They were supported by the secular rulers who benefited from taxes imposed on the Jews. The rulers did not totally protect them, however, and blood libels cropped up accompanied by violence. In 1182, Jews were expelled from France. Ashkenazi Jews continued to build communities in Germany until they faced riots and massacres in the 1200s and 1300s. Some Jews moved to Sephardi Spain while others set up Ashkenazi communities in Poland.

The center of Ashkenazi Jewry shifted to Poland, Lithuania, Bohemia and Moravia in the beginning of the 16th century. Jews were for the first time concentrated in Eastern

⁶ Adapted from <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/ashkenazim>

Background Lesson 1: Ashkenazi & Sephardi Jews

Appendix B

Europe instead of Western Europe. Polish Jews adopted the Ashkenazi rites, liturgy, and religious customs of the German Jews. The Ashkenazi mahzor (holiday prayer book) included prayers composed by poets of Germany and Northern France. In Poland, the Jews became fiscal agents, tax collectors, estate managers for noblemen, merchants and craftsmen. In the 1500-1600s, Polish Jewry grew to be the largest Jewish community in the diaspora. Many Jews lived in shtetls, small towns where the majority of the inhabitants were Jewish. They set up communities like those in the Middle Ages that elected a board of trustees to collect taxes, set up education systems and deal with other necessities of Jewish life. Each community had a yeshiva, where boys over the age of 13 learned Talmudic and rabbinic texts. Yiddish was the language of oral translation and of discussion of Torah and Talmud.

Ashkenazim focused on Hebrew, Torah and especially Talmud. They used religion to protect themselves from outside influences. The Jews at this time were largely middle class. By choice, they mostly lived in self-contained communities surrounding their synagogue and other communal institutions. Yiddish was the common language of Ashkenazi Jews in eastern and central Europe. With the start of the Renaissance and religious wars in the late 16th century, a divide grew between central and eastern European Jews. In central Europe, particularly in Germany, rulers forced the Jews to live apart from the rest of society in ghettos with between 100 and 500 inhabitants. The ghettos were generally clean and in good condition. Eastern European Jews lived in the shtetls, where Jews and gentiles lived side by side.

In the 1600s and 1700s, Jews in Poland, the center of Ashkenazi Jewry, faced blood libels and riots. The growth of Hasidism in Poland drew many Jews away from typical Ashkenazi practice. After the Chmielnicki massacres in Poland in 1648, Polish Jews spread through Western Europe, some even crossing the Atlantic. Many Ashkenazi Polish Jews fled to Amsterdam and joined previously existing communities of German Jews. The Ashkenazim were poor peddlers, petty traders, artisans, diamond polishers, jewelry workers and silversmiths.

By the end of the 19th century, as a result of Russian persecution, there was massive Ashkenazi emigration from Eastern Europe to other areas of Europe, Australia, South Africa, the United States and Israel. Before World War II, Ashkenazim comprised 90% of world Jewry. The destruction of European Jewry in World War II reduced the number of Ashkenazim and, the United States became the center for Ashkenazi Jews.

Over time Ashkenazim and Sephardim developed different prayer liturgies, Torah services, Hebrew pronunciation and ways of life. Originally, most Ashkenazim spoke Yiddish. Ashkenazi and Sephardi tunes for both prayers and Torah reading are different. An Ashkenazi Torah lies flat while being read, while a Sephardi Torah stands up. Ashkenazi scribes developed a distinctive script. One major difference is in the source used for deciding Jewish law. Sephardim follow Rabbi Joseph Caro's Shulhan Arukh. The Ashkenazim go by Rabbi Moses Isserles, who wrote a commentary on the Shulhan Arukh citing Ashkenazi practice. There are differences in many aspects of Jewish law, from which laws women are exempt from to what food one is allowed to eat on Passover.

Sephardi Jews ⁷

Descendants of Jews who left Spain or Portugal after the 1492 expulsion are referred to as Sephardim, which comes from the Hebrew word for Spain, *Sepharad*. It is believed that Jews have lived in Spain since the era of King Solomon (c.965-930 B.C.E.). Little information can be found on these Jews until the beginning of the first century.

In 409 C.E., the Visigoths conquered Spain. The Visigoths were Arian Christians who reasoned that Jesus could not logically co-exist with God and must therefore be subservient to him. In 587 C.E., King Reccared, the Visigoth king in Spain, converted to Roman Catholicism and made it the state religion. Subsequently, the Church was to exert powerful influence on all aspects of social life. In 589 C.E., a canon was passed forbidding the marriage between Christians and Jews; and in 612 C.E., the Council of Gundemar of Toledo ordered that all Jews submit to baptism within the year. By 638 C.E., the Arian Visigoths declared that “only Catholics could live in Spain.”

The situation improved in 711 when Spain fell under the rule of the Muslim Moors. Both Muslims and Jews built a civilization, known as Al-Andalus, which was more advanced than any civilization in Europe at that time. Jews were able to coexist peacefully with their neighbors but they were protected under Islamic law. Jews did not have complete autonomy and had to pay a special tax but were able to freely practice their religion.

The era of Muslim rule in Spain (8th-11th century) was considered the "Golden Age" for Spanish Jewry. Jewish intellectual and spiritual life flourished and many Jews served in Spanish courts. Jews also contributed to botany, geography, medicine, mathematics, poetry and philosophy. Many famous Jewish figures lived during the Golden Age and contributed to making this a flourishing period for Jewish thought. These included Samuel Ha-Nagid, Moses ibn Ezra, Solomon ibn Gabirol Judah Halevi and Moses Maimonides. Jews lived separately in aljamas (Jewish quarters). They were given administrative control over their communities and managed their own communal affairs. Jews had their own court system, known as the Bet Din.

Islamic culture also influenced the Jews. Muslim and Jewish customs and practices became intertwined. For example, Arabic was used for prayers rather than Hebrew or Spanish. Before entering the synagogue, Jews washed their hands and feet, which is also a practice done before entering a mosque. Arab melodies were used for Jewish songs.

The Christians conquered Toledo in 1098 and the Jews in Christian Spain prospered, while those in Muslim Spain suffered under the Almohad dynasty. Both Jews and Muslims were involved in cultural, economic, intellectual, financial and political life of Christian Spain. By the mid-13th century, the Christians controlled most of Spain and forced Jews to convert to Christianity. These New Christians are also known as crypto-Jews because they taught their children and practiced Judaism in secret.

Anti-Jewish riots broke out in 1391 and the situation worsened for the Jewish community. New Christians were tortured or killed in the Spanish

⁷ Adapted from <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/sephardim>

Background Lesson 1: Ashkenazi & Sephardi Jews

Appendix B

Inquisition during the 15th century. In 1492, Isabella and Ferdinand commanded that all Jews who refused to convert to Christianity be expelled from Spain. It is estimated that 100,000 Jews left Spain at this time.

Many Spanish Jews settled in Portugal, which allowed the practice of Judaism. In 1497, however, Portugal expelled eight Jews and the rest converted to Christianity. In the first Sephardi Diaspora, a large number of Jews settled in North Africa and in the Ottoman Empire, especially, Turkey and Greece. Spanish exiles brought with them a unique culture, language (Ladino) and traditions.

A Marrano Diaspora took place a century later. Some Marranos settled in Portugal and eventually moved to Holland, where they were allowed to outwardly practice Judaism. Many settled in Western Europe and moved to the Americas. Marranos who settled in Latin America continued practicing crypto-Judaism for many years. Fear of persecution led Crypto-Jews to settle in remote villages. Today, descendants of crypto-Jews can be found in Colorado and New Mexico.

For hundreds of years, Sephardi Jews lived, as dhimmis, in relative peace with Muslim neighbors and rulers in North Africa and in the Ottoman Empire. They were considered second-class citizens but were free to practice their own religion and participate in commerce. Similar to Spain and Portugal during the Golden Era, the Sephardi upper class in the Ottoman empire were employed as translators. In World War II, Sephardim in Europe suffered the same fate as other Jews, and most perished during the Holocaust.

After the establishment of the State of Israel, conditions for Jews in many Islamic countries grew increasingly uncomfortable. In the 1950's and 1960's, tens of thousands of Sephardi Jews fled from North Africa and other countries in the Middle East to settle in Israel. Once they came to Israel, most of the Sephardi immigrants were put in transit camps and became dependent on welfare. The conditions in these camps were very bad and it was difficult for the newcomers to work their way out of the lower rung of Israeli society because they had less education than the established Ashkenazic community.

The Sephardi Jews preserved their special language, which was a combination of Hebrew and Spanish, known as Ladino. Ladino is still spoken by some Sephardi communities, such as those in Greece, Turkey, Bulgaria, Rumania, France and Latin America. Today the largest Ladino-speaking community can be found in Israel.

Sephardi and Ashkenazi Jews share the same tenets of Judaism, follow the Babylonian Talmud and the Shulkhan Arukh. Differences arise in customs and in liturgy. For example, on Passover, Sephardi Jews eat kitnyot, rice and corn products. Also, at many Sephardi Sedars, the father will reenact the experience of gaining freedom by circling the Sedar table and holding a symbolic bag over his shoulder.

Other differences exist in the way Sephardi Jews wind their tefillin straps outwards, whereas Ashkenazi Jews wind the tefillin inwards. Sephardi grooms are honored with an aliyah to the Torah on the Shabbat after their wedding, whereas Ashkenazi grooms are called up to the Torah the Shabbat before the wedding. Sephardi Torah scrolls are

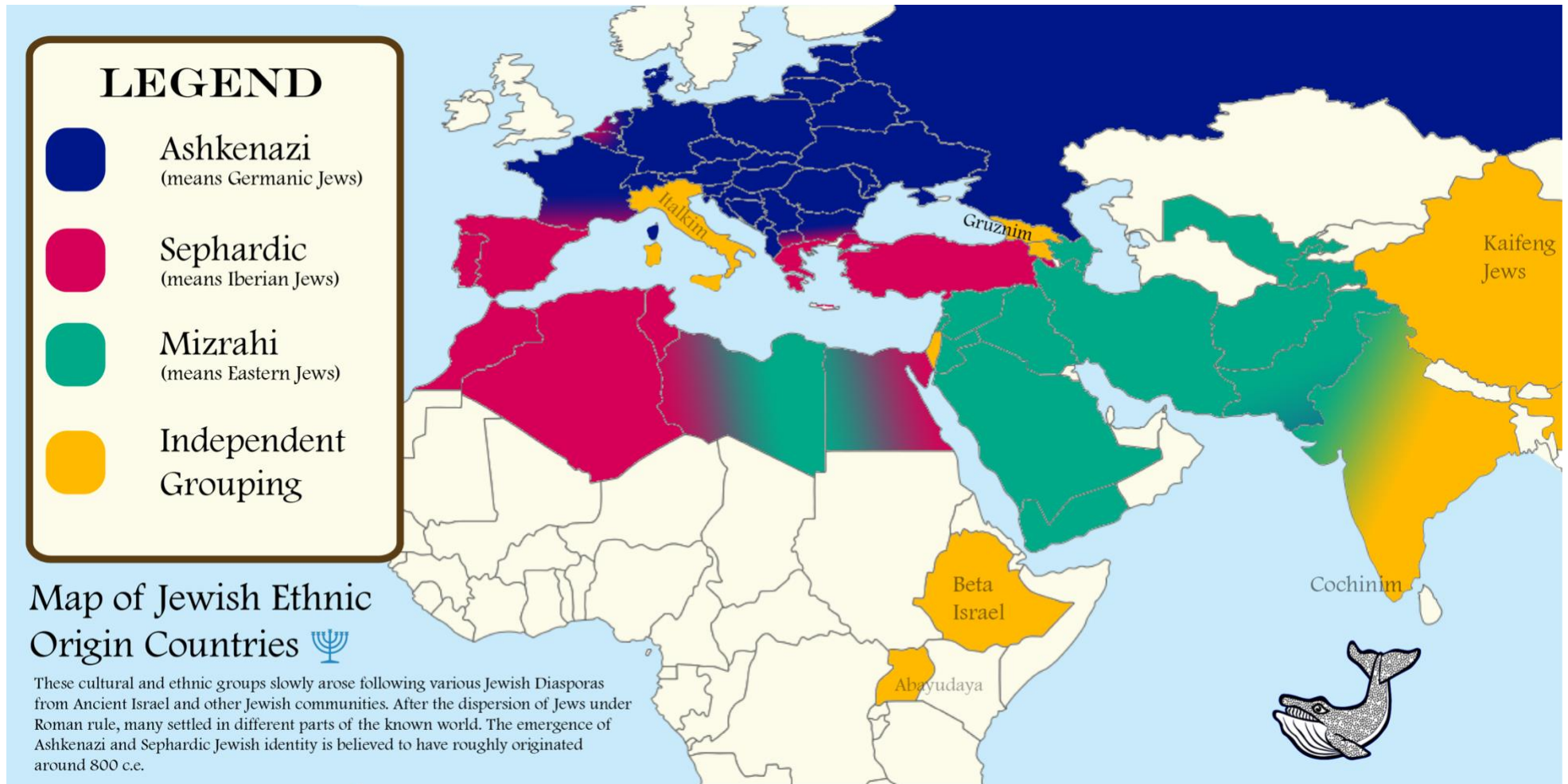
Background Lesson 1: Ashkenazi & Sephardi Jews

Appendix B

usually stored in a large wooden cylinder, which stands erect when opened. The parchment is in an upright position when read, whereas, Ashkenazi scrolls just have an embroidered cover and the scrolls are read while lying flat on a table. All Sephardi synagogues are traditional, women are seated separately, typically in a balcony.

Background Lesson 1: Ashkenazi & Sephardi Jews

Appendix C



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https://external-preview.redd.it/g_u5RxQVCXx0rP3VvnBnyiwmc4Orj3zp476xbAZusmU.png?auto=webp&s=3b3988dcf0502d04471781a7a5bd1ee5332c32f0

Kehillot haOlam: Background

Lesson 2: Sephardi Jews Part II

Goals

- To discuss the difference between the four groups of Sephardi Jews: Western, Eastern, North Africa, B'nai Anusim.
- To provide students with a broader historical, cultural, and geographical perspective of the communities we will explore throughout the year.
- To help students understand the importance of the Ladino language in Sephardi culture.

Essential Questions

- What are the unique ways that the Western, Eastern, North Africa, and B'nai Anusim Sephardi Jews connect to Judaism?
- Why is Ladino considered both a dying language and a language in the midst of revival?

Objectives (*Students will be able to...*)

- Articulate where the Western, Eastern, North Africa, and B'nai Anusim Sephardi Jews are from and where they live now.
- Compare and contrast the Western, Eastern, North Africa, and B'nai Anusim Sephardi Jews.
- Explain the importance of Ladino in Sephardi culture and history.

Supplies:

- Pens, 1 per student
- Scratch off Map of the World
- 4 large white poster boards
- 4 sets of markers
- Computer with sound and internet
- Projector
- Index cards, 1-2 per student

Other Things to Prepare:

- Print copies of *Appendix A: Map of Jewish Ethnic Origin*, in color, 1 per student
- Read some of the questions that the students wrote on index cards during the closure of last week's lesson. Spend some time researching the answers and prepare to answer the them at the beginning of this week's lesson.
- Remind students to bring their phones and/or a computer to this lesson
- Load the YouTube Video, "NYU Ladino Documentary" on a computer.
 - Here is the link:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=175&v=KtMMDkwOScU&feature=emb_logo
- Activity 1 asks the students to present their posters to another class. Prior to this lesson, communicate with the teacher to whom you will have your teens present.

Kehillot haOlam: Background

Lesson 2: Sephardi Jews Part II

Set Induction

(15 minutes)

Review last week's lesson on Ashkenazi and Sephardi Jews by asking the following questions, referring to *Appendix A: Map of Jewish Ethnic Origin*. Students can refer to their graphic organizers as well for guidance:

- ❓ Who are Ashkenazi Jews? Where are Ashkenazi Jews from? How did they get there?
- ❓ Who are Sephardi Jews? Where are Sephardi Jews from? How did they get there?
- ❓ What are the unique ways that Ashkenazi Jews connect to Judaism?
- ❓ What are the unique ways that Sephardi Jews connect to Judaism?

Take a few moments to answer some of the questions that the students wrote on index cards during the closure from last class. Let them know that they can continue to add questions to this box.

Activity 1: Sephardi Jews Continued

(40 minutes)

Explain to the students that there are actually four different group of Sephardi Jews: Western, Eastern, North Africa, and B'nai Anusim. These Sephardi Jews are descendants of the expellees from Spain who also left as Jews in 1492.

Pull out *Appendix A: Map of Jewish Ethnic Origin*, using it to explain where these Sephardi Jews are from:

- “Western Sephardi” are from Spain or Portugal and are comprised of the Jewish ex-conversos whose families initially remained in Spain and Portugal as forced converts but now consider themselves Jewish.
- “Eastern Sephardi” settled mostly in the Near East (West Asia's Middle East such as Anatolia, the Levant and Egypt), the Balkans in Southeastern Europe, Greece, Turkey, and Sarajevo in what is today Bosnia and Herzegovina.
- “North African Sephardi” settled around North Africa (except Egypt), Morocco and Algeria, and they spoke a variant of Judaeo-Spanish known as Haketia.
- “B'nai Anusim Sephardi” are descendants of Spanish and Portuguese Jews who were forced to convert to Catholicism in Iberia and remain Catholic today. They now live in places like Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Chile, Ecuador, Mexico, Puerto Rico, Venezuela, and Dominican Republic.

Kehillot haOlam: Background

Lesson 2: Sephardi Jews Part II

Like we saw with the difference between Ashkenazi Jews and Sephardi Jews last week, these different groups of Sephardi Jews speak different languages, have distinct immigration stories, histories, and have thus adopted unique Jewish customs.

Break the students into four groups. Assign each group to research either the Western, Eastern, North Africa, and B'nai Anusim Sephardi Jews. Using their phones and/or computers their task is to research their topic and create a poster board which represents their research in a creative way. They should think of this like an advertisement for their group. Once complete, they should go present their posters to another class. Let them know these will be hung on the wall for the duration of the class so that they can refer back to them from time to time. Thus, they should think clearly about how they organize the important information. They can use the questions/categories from the graphic organizer in Lesson 1 to help guide them such as:

- Countries of Origin
- Common Languages
- Influential Figures
- Immigration Story
- Religious Custom
- Other Interesting Facts

They can also explore a particular area of interest to them like music, art, sport, literature, news articles, food, etc. within each of the groups.

Pass out 1 white poster board and markers to each group. Give them 30 minutes to do their research and create their poster as a group. Then have each group present their poster to the class. Once everyone has presented, ask the following questions:

- ❓ What are some similarities that you notice between these groups of Sephardi Jews?
- ❓ What are some difference that you notice between these groups of Sephardi Jews?

Activity 2: Ladino

(15 minutes)

Ladino, also called Judeo-Spanish, Sefardí, Judío/Djudyo, and Haquetía, is a Jewish language of Latin origin, spoken primarily in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Greece, France, Turkey, and Israel.

Kehillot haOlam: Background

Lesson 2: Sephardi Jews Part II

Watch the “NYU Ladino Documentary” and discuss how it fits into their understanding of Sephardi Jews.

- 🕒 What does it mean that Ladino is considered a “dying language”?
- 🕒 How is the Ladino language being revived today?
- 🕒 Do you think Ladino will survive 100 years from now? Why or why not?

Here is the video link:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=175&v=KtMMDkwOScU&feature=emb_logo

For more information about the Ladino language, consult *Appendix B: What is Ladino?*

Closure

(5 minutes)

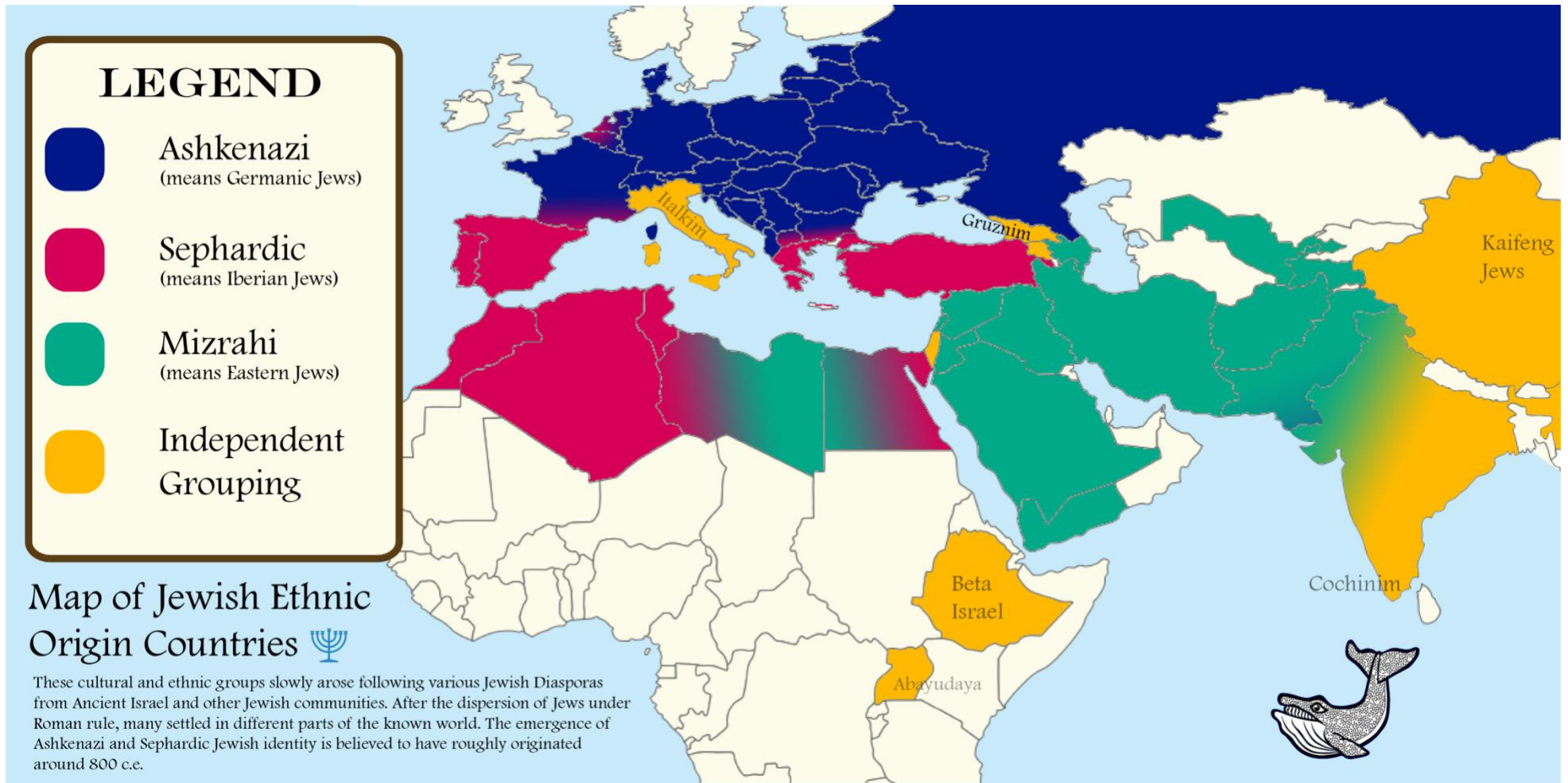
Hand out 1 index card to each student. Instruct them to write a question or statement that they have regarding Sephardi Jews. They can put their name of on them or write them anonymously. Collect the index cards at the end of class and store them somewhere safe so that they are ready for the next session.

Next week the students will explore Mizrahi Jews, which often get confused as another group of Sephardi Jews. It is important that the students understand Sephardi Jews before moving on.

Now that the students have explored more about Sephardi Jews, use this opportunity to take an inventory of questions that the students have regarding the 4 groups of Sephardi Jews. If they do not have any questions, have them write down something that was clarified for them throughout these last two lessons.

Background Lesson 2: Sephardi Jews Part II

Appendix A



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⁹ https://external-preview.redd.it/g_u5RxQVCXx0rP3VvnBnyiwmc4Orj3zp476xbAZusmU.png?auto=webp&s=3b3988dcf0502d04471781a7a5bd1ee5332c32f0

What is Ladino? ¹⁰

Judeo-Spanish (JS) is a language of Hispanic stock spoken and written by Jews of Spanish origin. Its phonology, morphology, and lexicon derive, for the most part, from pre-16th-century Spanish, and, as with other Jewish languages, the influence of Hebrew is felt, particularly in lexical areas associated with religious observance and practice, and, more restrictedly, in affective and taboo uses of Hebrew words and concepts.

Through contact with the languages of those Mediterranean countries in which the Jews settled after their expulsion from Spain in 1492, a number of lexical items, as well as a smaller number of morphological and syntactical elements, have entered the language from Turkish, Arabic, French, and, to a lesser extent, Italian.

Upon leaving Spain whole communities of Jews headed east through Italy to the lands of the Ottoman Empire at the invitation of Sultan Bayazid, and important centers, which survived until the Second World War, grew in present-day Turkey, Greece, Israel, and Egypt, with smaller ones in Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Romania, and the island of Rhodes. Their speech is described by linguists as eastern JS.

For a century or so prior to the Expulsion, persecuted Spanish Jews also found shelter in North Africa, and speech communities grew along the northern coast of Morocco. The speech of this region, which bears a marked resemblance to its eastern counterpart both phonetically and in the retention of Old Spanish lexemes, is denominated western.

The 20th-century witnessed the annihilation of many of the eastern Mediterranean communities as a result of Nazi persecution, and in the late 1950s the fear of persecution also threatened many of the Moroccan communities. And so, with the displacement and dispersal of the old JS-speaking communities from their traditional centers, largely towards Israel but also to Europe, North and South America, speakers came into contact with, and eventually adopted, the language of their new surroundings.

A current debate on JS nomenclature raises some interesting points about linguistic evolution and linguistic consciousness. In the eastern Mediterranean the language is referred to by a variety of names. In general, two persons who speak the same language do not feel the need to identify to one another the language they are speaking; however, the need for identification does arise when they come into contact with non-native speakers. This could well explain why, following the break-up of traditional communities in the eastern Mediterranean in the early 19th century, the language is confusingly referred to by a variety of names.

Spanyol is perhaps the most commonly used among speakers of the language, with its unmistakable reference to their linguistic and cultural origins. Its widespread use is confirmed by the Modern Hebrew coinage Spanyolit (Spanyol + Heb. suffix for forming language names), the name by which the language was referred to until quite recently in Israel. Ladino, probably the earliest attested name, has the widest currency today, and certainly so in Israel where the

¹⁰ <https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/ladino/>

Background Lesson 2: Sephardi Jews Part II

Appendix B

largest speech-communities in the modern world are to be found. The term has another application which is discussed below.

The names Judezmo and Judió/Jidió, which are registered in some 19th- and early 20th-century communal publications, clearly have the function of underlining a Jewish identification among speakers. Judezmo is the Spanish word for “Judaism”, and, for this reason, is used by certain scholars today who wish, on ideological grounds, to draw a semantic equation between Judezmo and Yiddish; however, it seems rather late in the day to rename the language. Faced by this terminological plurality, scholarship has generally opted for the more descriptive and neutral “Judeo-Spanish.”

In the western Mediterranean, the language is frequently referred to as *hakitia* (formed on Moroccan Arabic *haka* “to converse” + diminutive suffix), although it is interesting to note that with the renewed impact of Modern Spanish in this area in the 19th century, the term is reserved by speakers to describe an artificial language of humor which abounds in archaic forms of Spanish and Hispanicized Arabisms, or else to the language as spoken in some distant past. However, though it is more similar to Modern Spanish than its eastern counterpart, the language continues to preserve many characteristic features.

Up to the beginning of the 20th century the language was almost always written in Hebrew characters using the standard Hebrew alphabet with some modifications, mostly in the form of diacritical marks, to accommodate Hispanic phonemes. The earliest texts appeared in “square” characters either with or without vowels, but the bulk of printed material is in a cursive (rabbinic) script. Some early manuscripts preserve a cursive script known as *solitreo*, which is still in use among native speakers in personal correspondence, for example.

Two views about the origins of JS prevail. One holds that Jews in medieval Spain spoke the same language as their non-Jewish contemporaries, while drawing on Hebrew terms to express religio-cultural concepts not current in Spanish (for example, *Shabbat*), and preserving, at the same time, a number of archaisms. The language thus acquires a separate linguistic identity only after 1492.

The second view, which is gaining greater currency, maintains that JS, while being essentially a form of spoken medieval Spanish, had linguistic features of its own long before 1492, owing not merely to the presence of Hebrew words, but also to the peculiar sociolinguistic conditions which affected Jewish communities during their long history in the Iberian Peninsula, and to the greater linguistic receptivity by Jews to the waning Arabic culture. Thus the Arabic borrowing *ahad* (“the first [day]”) is retained for “Sunday” in preference to the Spanish *domingo* (from Latin *dies Dominicus* “the Lord’s day”), with its Christian connotation; *ahad* appears in medieval texts and continues to be in use in both eastern and western JS.

The first editions of the JS Bible translations appeared in the 16th century, although these are believed to reflect an earlier tradition elaborated by the Spanish Jews long before their expulsion. The language of these texts is usually referred to in scholarship as *Ladino*: it is characterized by an artificiality which permeates, especially, the lexicon and syntax, and which is the result of a method of translation where the strictest adherence to the Hebrew original is

Background Lesson 2: Sephardi Jews Part II

Appendix B

the rule. It is generally accepted that these texts do not reflect the spoken language, although clearly they share common features with it.

Two centuries later, the first complete Ladino translation of the Old Testament in Hebrew characters (1739-45) was edited in Constantinople by Abraham Assa, and editions of it continued to be produced throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. This highly literal method of translation was so widely accepted that it was even adopted by Christian missionaries in 1873 in their JS Bible translation.

The same method is also reflected by translations of liturgical works which first appeared in the sixteenth century and have continued to do so up to the present. Among them are the Ladino translations of the daily and festival prayerbooks, manuscript fragments of which date from before the Expulsion, the Haggadah, and the Pirkei Avot [Ethics of the Patriarchs, a talmudic book]. Halachic [Jewish legal] literature dating from the 16th century also displays this translation language and incorporates much Hebrew phraseology; however, the language does not show the same degree of rigid adherence to Hebrew as that found in the Ladino Bible and liturgical translations. Among these is a selection from Yosef Caro's Shulhan Arukh [a major code of Jewish law] entitled Shulhan Hapanim (Salonica, 1568).

The reader of JS, as opposed to Ladino, literature may be struck by the fact that the language he is reading reflects a spoken rather than a literary variety. The sensation is of a strong tradition of oral literature, which is eventually committed to paper. A notable case is that of the traditional ballads known as romances, which comprise many medieval Spanish examples of the genre, as well as more recent ones based on the traditional model. But JS texts in Hebrew characters also number among the earliest witnesses of Spanish literary activity. The kharjas incorporated into the poetry of such major figures of the Golden Age of Hebrew verse in Spain as Yehudah Halevi in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, are an example of this as is a fifteenth-century fragment of an early JS poem on the biblical story of Joseph, Coplas de Yocef.

The best-known and most widely translated JS work of the post exilic period is the Me'am Lo'ez (1730), which was begun by Yaacov Khuli and continued over a long period, in series form, by a number of different authors writing under the same title. A midrashic work, the Me'am Lo'ez is structured mainly on the Pentateuch and spans the sources of Jewish thought. The beginning of the 19th century saw the growth of a secular literature, which was popular, for the most part, and included a sizable corpus of original compositions such as novels, short stories, plays, and popular histories as well as adaptations of major European novels of the period, where the impact of French on JS is significantly felt. This is also observed in the JS press which began to flourish in the eastern Mediterranean at the same time; only a small number of newspapers continue to appear today.

There can be no doubt, therefore, as to the slow disappearance of JS as a spoken language. Traditional linguistic registers are gradually being overtaken by those of the co-territorial languages, and the language is no longer transmitted to succeeding generations in the normal manner.

Background Lesson 2: Sephardi Jews Part II

Appendix B

Today, only small clusters of native speakers, usually of an advanced age, are to be found scattered around the globe. However, although the spoken language may have been the principal vehicle for the transmission of JS culture up to now, as the language “dies,” more and more people seem to be taking to the pen in order to write in and about it.

At first sight this may appear paradoxical. However, a spoken language looks partly to the written word for conservation, and this becomes, in turn, a different vehicle for the transmission of a culture and guards against its annihilation.

Kehillot haOlam: Background

Lesson 3: Mizrahi Jews

Goals

- To help students understand how Mizrahi Jews relate to but are different from Sephardi Jews.
- To encourage students to collect information on the personal lives and stories of Mizrahi Jews who were displaced from their ancestral homes.
- To provide students with a broader historical, cultural, and geographical perspective of some of the communities we will explore throughout the year.

Essential Questions

- Who are Mizrahi Jews? Where are Mizrahi Jews from? How did they get there?
- Why are Mizrahi Jews often confused as Sephardi Jews?

Objectives (Students will be able to...)

- List 2 unique characteristics of Mizrahi Jews.
- Articulate where Mizrahi Jews are from and where they live now.
- Explain one immigration story via the iconic movie “Sallah.”

Supplies:

- Scratch off Map of the World
- Internet-connected computer with audio

Other Things to Prepare:

- Copies of Appendix A: What is the difference between “Sephardi” and “Mizrahi?”, 1 per student
- Copies of Appendix B: Jewish Ethnicity Venn Diagram, 1 per student.
- Here is the link to watch *Sallah* with subtitles:
<https://archive.org/details/Salah.Shabati.Israeli>

Kehillot haOlam: Background

Lesson 3: Mizrahi Jews

Set Induction

(5 minutes)

Instruct students to think for a moment about an event in their lives that made a huge impact in who they are today. It can be something positive or negative. Allow those who feel comfortable to share their event and why it made such an impact on who they are today.

Explain that this week we will learn about another group of Jews, the Mizrahi Jews, who also have a specific event in their history that are pivotal in explain who they are and their overall narrative.

Activity 1: Review

(10 minutes)

Review last week’s lesson on Sephardi Jews by asking the following questions. Students can refer to their posters as well for guidance:

- ⊙ Who are Western Sephardi Jews? Where are they from? How did they get there?
- ⊙ Who are Eastern Sephardi Jews? Where are they from? How did they get there?
- ⊙ Who are North African Sephardi Jews? Where are they from? How did they get there?
- ⊙ Who are the B’nai Israel Sephardi people? Where are they from? How did they get there?

Take a few moments to answer some of the questions that the students wrote on index cards during the closure from last class. Let them know that they can continue to add questions to this box.

Activity 1: Mizrahi Jews

(15 minutes)

Explain that Mizrahi is a term transferred to the descendants of the Jewish communities that had existed in the Middle East and North Africa from biblical times into the modern era. Mizrahi Jews are often confused as being a subgroup of Sephardi Jews but they are actually distinctly different. Mizrahi Jews include descendants of Babylonian Jews from modern Iraq and Iraqi Kurdistan, Syria, Yemen, Georgia, Mountain Jews from Dagestan and Azerbaijan, Persian Jews from Iran, Bukharan Jews from Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, as well as Jews from Egypt, Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco.

Take a moment to read more about Mizrahi Jews on *Appendix A: What is the difference between “Sephardi” and “Mizrahi”?* When you are done, ask the following questions

- ⊙ Why do Mizrahi Jews often get confused as a subgroup of Sephardi Jews?

Kehillot haOlam: Background

Lesson 3: Mizrahi Jews

🕒 What makes Mizrahi Jews distinct from Sephardi Jews?

Activity 2: Operation Magic Carpet

(30 minutes)

Many Mizrahi Jews immigrated to Israel at various times throughout the 1900's. One such population immigrated via the famous "Operation Magic Carpet" - a clandestine operation that flew 49,000 Yemenite Jews to Israel in 1949. This is one of the pivotal events that occurred in Mizrahi history and has heavily shaped the Mizrahi narrative today. To learn a bit about Mizrahi Jews at this time, have the students watch some of the movie *Sallah*.

Here is a synopsis of the film:

- *Sallah Shabati* is a 1964 Israeli comedy film about the chaos of Israeli immigration and resettlement. This social satire introduced actor Chaim Topol (*Fiddler on the Roof*) to audiences worldwide. The film's name, *Sallah Shabati* is a play on words; ostensibly a Yemenite Jewish name, it is also intended to evoke the phrase, (lit. "Sorry I came"), equivalent to "excuse me for living" in English. The film begins with *Sallah Shabati*, a Mizrahi Jewish immigrant, arriving with his family in Israel. Upon arrival he is brought to live in a *ma'abara*, or transit camp. He is given a broken down, one room shack in which to live in with his family and spends the rest of the movie attempting to make enough money to purchase adequate housing. His money-making schemes are often comical and frequently satirizes the political and social stereotypes in Israel of the time. ¹¹

Here is the link to watch *Sallah* with subtitles: <https://archive.org/details/Salah.Shabati.Israeli>

After watching the first 15-20 minutes of the movie, ask the students the following questions:

- 🕒 How does this movie portray Mizrahi Jews?
- 🕒 What did life look like for Mizrahi Jews when they immigrated to Israel?
- 🕒 Why do you think Operation Magic Carpet became such an important part of the Mizrahi story?

Closure

(15 Minutes)

- 🕒 How are Mizrahi Jews similar to Sephardi or Ashkenazi Jews?
- 🕒 How are Mizrahi Jews different from Sephardi or Ashkenazi Jews?

Use *Appendix B: Jewish Ethnicity Venn Diagram* to help students understand and remember this information for later. Create a 3-circle Venn Diagram on the board to help students get started on these differences and similarities. Have them fill out as much as they can on their own first, then come together as a class to discuss what they missed.

¹¹ Adapted from <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0058541/plotsummary#synopsis>

“What is the difference between “Sephardi” and “Mizrahi”?”

Although sometimes used interchangeably, the terms “Sephardi” and “Mizrahi” refer to two distinct Jewish diasporas, each one itself characterized by significant internal cultural diversity. Despite many divergences, having inhabited numerous polities in different circumstances over the ages, these groups also shared important characteristics, including some religious rites and customs. Additionally, since a majority lived for many centuries in the Islamic world, both “Sephardi” and “Mizrahi” Jews encountered the modern age facing many of the same forces, among them Western colonialism, the dissolution of empire, and the rise of nation-states.

Sephardi

First appearing in the Book of Obadiah 1:20, the term Sepharad came to be linked to Hispania, the Latin word for Spain. The presence of Jews on the Iberian Peninsula dates back to the Roman period, and medieval sources confirm that Jews indeed used the word Sephardi to refer to themselves. While living under Islamic rule, Sephardi Jews participated in the intellectual, artistic, and scientific achievements of the ninth and tenth centuries, a period that would later be termed a “Golden Age.” With the conquest of Spain by Christian forces, a centuries-long process known as the Reconquista, the position of Sephardi Jewry was destabilized, as the community faced increasing hostility due to efforts of the Church to eradicate heresy. After over a century of physical violence, forced baptisms, and disputations, in 1492 this hostility culminated in the Edict of Expulsion, which gave the Jews of Spain the choice to either convert or leave. The last and largest expulsion of Jews from Western Europe of the period, 1492 gave rise to multiple Sephardi diasporas. A majority of those choosing exile migrated eastward toward Ottoman lands, where they settled in cities such as Salonika, Istanbul, and later Izmir. A smaller group opted for Portugal, where they were forcibly baptized only five years later and migrated as “New Christians” in later years to cities such as Amsterdam, London, Bordeaux, and Hamburg. Still others chose North Africa, most notably Morocco, where they developed a dialect called Haketia. While Sephardi Jews reconstituted their communities in disparate locations, they experienced particularly marked longevity in Ottoman lands, where a relatively tolerant environment allowed them to maintain group cohesion. The eastern Mediterranean became home to vibrant Judeo-Spanish culture that flourished there until the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire.

Mizrahi

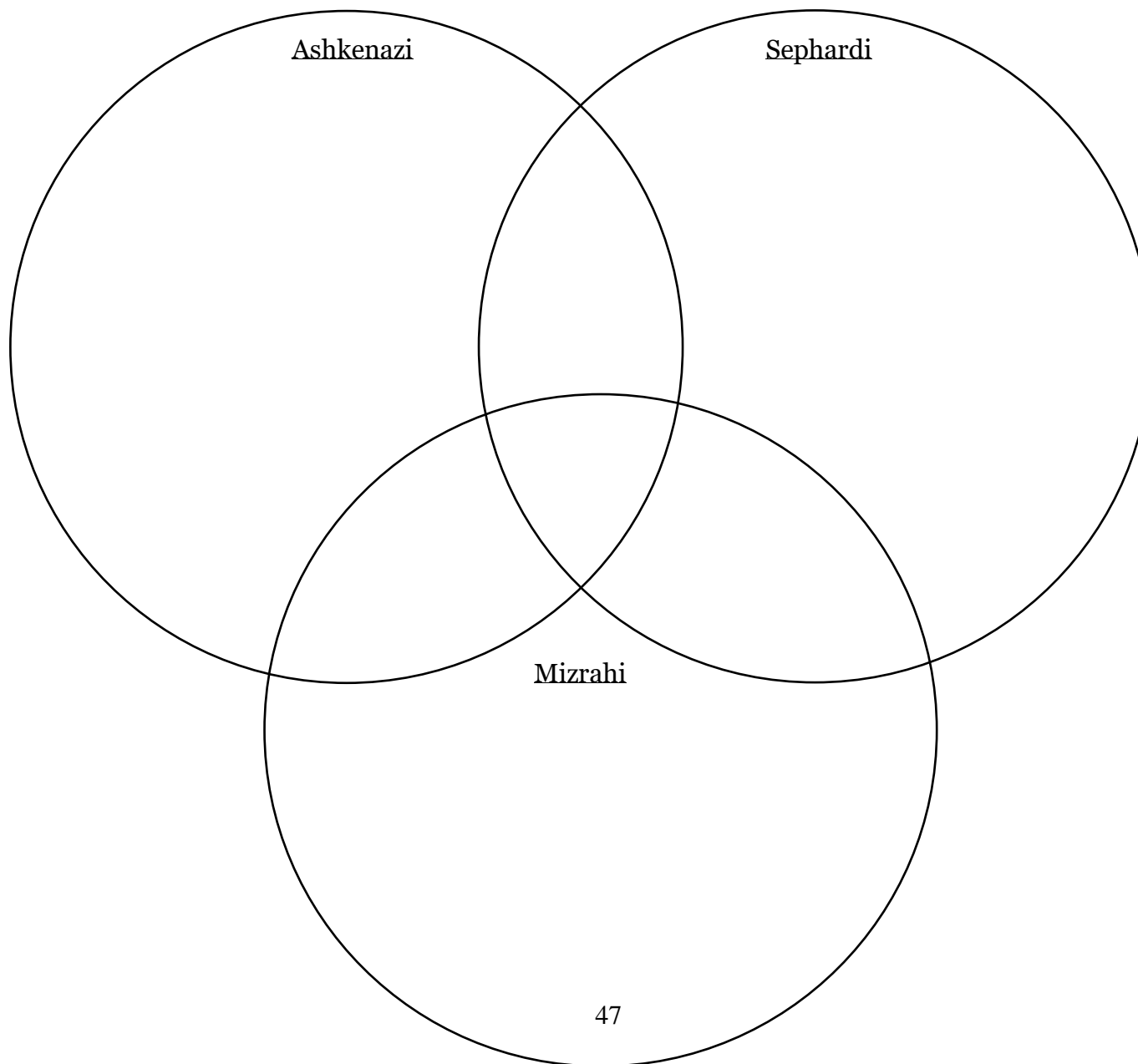


Image: The perception of Morocco as “eastern” with respect to Poland is the result of a certain cultural perspective.

Meaning “Eastern,” the category “Mizrahi” is a more recent phenomenon. It collapses into one catch-all term numerous Jewish sub-cultures from across the Middle East, North Africa, and central Asia, some of which date back millennia. As it is typically employed, it encompasses communities as diverse as Farsi-speaking Persian Jews, Arabic-speaking Jews of the Maghreb (western north Africa) and the Mashreq (areas east of the Mediterranean Sea), and Berber-speaking Jews of the Atlas Mountains of Morocco, among others. As a classification, the term came to prominence in the early years of Israeli statehood, when Jews from these regions were described as ‘edot ha-mizrah, or “communities of the East.” This terminology was undergirded by an ideological preoccupation with the supposed “backwardness” of the “Orient.” A mere glance at the world map reveals that the categorization of Moroccan Jewry, for example, as “eastern” on the part of Jews descended from Russia and Poland is ultimately much more about a certain cultural geography than anything else. By the 1980s, mizrahim came to displace ‘edot ha-mizrah, as scholars believed it highlighted the social realities of Israeli discrimination against these communities, while activists had begun to appropriate the term and construct a new identity around it. More recently, some scholars have called for the usage of the category of “Arab Jew.” While not applicable to many different “Mizrahi” populations, it nonetheless underscores how the term “Mizrahi” was a product of a false binary between “Jew” and “Arab” that was presupposed by Zionist teleology.¹²

¹² <https://katz.sas.upenn.edu/blog/what-do-you-know-sephardi-vs-mizrahi>

Jewish Ethnicity Venn Diagram



Kehillot haOlam: Background

Lesson 4: Authentic Assessment

Goals

- To synthesize and apply the learning from lessons 1-3.
- To help students gain a broader historical and cultural perspective of the communities we will explore throughout the curriculum.

Essential Questions

- What have I learned from this unit?
- How can I take what I've learned into my life today?
- Who are the Ashkenazi, Sephardi and Mizrahi Jews?
- What are the unique ways that Ashkenazi, Sephardi and Mizrahi Jews connect to Judaism?

Objectives (*Students will be able to...*)

- Synthesize the learning and articulate their takeaways that occurred between lessons 1-3.
- Compare and contrast the Ashkenazi, Sephardi and Mizrahi Jews.

Notes to the Educator

This lesson looks the same for every unit. While the content and number of lessons in each unit differ, this final lesson will include an authentic assessment of the student's choosing. This lesson lists some options for the students, however there are an endless number of options. As best you can (within reason) encourage students to think creatively regarding how they want to show their learning on this day. For many of these options, it is advised that they choose their authentic assessment assignment *before* the unit begins, as they may need to do things throughout the lessons to contribute to this assessment. Instruct them to do a different Authentic Assessment for each unit.

As the educator, you can also decide that every student does the same assignment but adjusts it to appeal to their needs and understanding of the material. If that is the case, it is advised that you choose 1 option per unit so that they do not duplicate assignments between units.

Refer to the Hanukkah Authentic Assessment on p. 199 for script.

Kehillot haOlam: Background

Lesson 4: Authentic Assessment

Set Induction

(2 minutes)

Explain to the students that they will do an “authentic assessment” of the learning gained throughout this unit. An authentic assessment is a way for an educator to gauge what material was learned throughout a given time. Remind students that unlike in school where they are given tests, and papers, this authentic assessment, allows them to create something meaningful to them.

Let the students know that you will provide a list of authentic assessment ideas that they could do for this Background Unit. They will see some of the same options each time as well as some variation for each unit; however, they must do different assessments for each one. The asterisk (*) indicates the assessments that are unique to the unit. If none of these ideas speak to the students, encourage them to bring in other ideas. There are only 2 criteria: it must show what they have learned in some way and it should be something that they are excited to create and share with the class.

Activity 1

(10-15 minutes)

Begin by reviewing what they have learned during this Background Unit. Encourage students to list as many things as they can remember first, then you can jump in to remind them of details. One way to do this is by bringing in the Venn diagram they created during this unit.

Lesson 1: Ashkenazi & Sephardic Jews

Lesson 2: Sephardic Jews Part II

Lesson 3: Mizrahi Jews

Activity 2

Now it is their turn to create something meaningful. Here is a list of options for them to choose from:

Historical Figure *

- Research a Jewish historical figure that we did not discuss in class. Where is this person’s family from? Were they Ashkenazi, Sephardi, Mizrahi, or from somewhere else?

Timeline *

- Create a timeline that outlines major historical events in Ashkenazi, Sephardi and Mizrahi history. This can be done with arts and craft supplies in some way, electronically as a PowerPoint, or any other method of assessment.

Kehillot haOlam: Background

Lesson 4: Authentic Assessment

Explore other Jewish Communal Histories *

- Create something of your choice that exemplifies your learning. Below is a list of some ideas:

1. Ethiopian Jews
2. Indian Jews
3. Cuban Jews
4. French Jews
5. Mexican Jews
6. Italian Jews
7. Chinese Jews

Vision Board

- Using magazines, paper, scissors and glue, create a collage board that includes ideas learned throughout this lesson. This should somehow illustrate how you plan to bring these global Jewish histories to life.

Blog Post

- Write a blog post that illustrates your three main takeaways from this unit. What did you learn and how has it impacted your Jewish identity? What questions do you still have? What are you most looking forward to exploring further?
- Write a blog post about your own family's history. Are your ancestors of Ashkenazi, Sephardic or Mizrahi origin? Are there any unique practices that they brought to this country? Historical artifacts? *

Vlog

- Similar to the blog, record yourself discussing your three main takeaways from this unit. You could even bring in video clippings from previous lessons to better illustrate your learning.

Instagram Story

- Using your Instagram or a new Instagram account, document the variety of activities that we did throughout this unit. This can be done as the lessons are taught and/or something larger at the end to summarize.

Song Playlist

- Create a playlist of traditional Ashkenazi, Sephardi and Mizrahi music. Publish the playlist somewhere (perhaps the synagogue's website and/or social media page) so that others can enjoy these songs.

Organize a Service

- Shed light on the unfamiliar details of Ashkenazi, Sephardi and/or Mizrahi history by creating a Shabbat service for the synagogue. Include brief histories and anecdotes or music from various places.

Kehillot haOlam: Background

Lesson 4: Authentic Assessment

Cooking

- Cook a traditional Ashkenazi, Sephardi or Mizrahi dish of your choice. Creatively explain this food's origin and share some of the community's history.

Interview

- Find someone who is of a different Jewish origin than you. Interview them about their family's history and any unique customs, traditions or rituals within their family.

Closure

Create a way for the students to all present their authentic assessments to one another. You can invite the students' families, clergy team, board members of the congregation, or keep it intimate with just the class. It could also be simply asking students to give an elevator pitch of the learning from the Authentic Assessment they created outside of class.

UNIT 2:
ROSH
HASHANAH

Kehillot haOlam: Rosh Hashanah

Lesson 1: Indian Rosh Hashanah Seder

Goals

- To facilitate participation of the rituals associated with a Rosh Hashanah Seder in India.
- To help students cook items that are symbolic to Indian Jews around Rosh Hashanah.

Essential Questions

- What is a Rosh Hashanah Seder?
- How is a Rosh Hashanah Seder similar and different from a Passover Seder?
- How have the Jews of India adopted this tradition in ways that are authentic to who they are as a people?

Objectives (Students will be able to...)

- Compare and contrast a Rosh Hashanah Seder with a Passover Seder.
- List the symbolic items associated with a Rosh Hashanah Seder in India.
- Articulate the meaning of each of the items associated with a Rosh Hashanah Seder in India.

Supplies:

- Fish head
- Head of lettuce
- Apples
- Honey
- Beet root
- Pumpkin
- Green beans
- Leeks, Chives or Scallions
- Pomegranate
- Challah (two flat chapattis, roasted crisp)
- Dates

Other Things to Prepare:

- Set a table large enough to fit every student.
- Set a place setting that includes every item of the Indian Seder plate and all of the items listed above. If there is something you cannot find, simply print a photo of it online and place it on the Seder plates.
- Print copies of *Appendix A: Indian Rosh Hashanah Interview*, 1 per student.
- Print copies of *Appendix B: Indian Rosh Hashanah Seder*, 1 per student

Kehillot haOlam: Rosh Hashanah

Lesson 1: Indian Rosh Hashanah Seder

Set Induction

(5 minutes)

Begin by reviewing what the students know about the Passover Seder. Remind them of the items that are on a Seder plate, what each item means, the order of the Seder, the story of Passover, and the overall intention behind Passover. Explain that many communities also do a Seder to commemorate Rosh Hashanah. Today they are going to experience a Rosh Hashanah Seder that has been adapted by the Jewish community in India.

Activity 1: Background on Indian Rosh Hashanah

(15 minutes)

Pass out copies of *Appendix A: Indian Rosh Hashanah Interview* to each student. Ask for two volunteers to read the article to the class: one asking the questions, and the other person answering. This will give them some background on the Jewish community of India before diving into the Seder itself.

Activity 2: Indian Rosh Hashanah Seder

(45 minutes)

Explain that on the first night of Rosh Hashanah, Indian Jews hold a special ceremony at home during which they recite blessings over a variety of foods that symbolize their wishes for the year ahead.

According to Rahel Musleah at MyJewishlearning.com:

“To prepare these foods to be both beautiful and tasty, dates can be split, stuffed with walnut halves, and arranged in concentric ovals. Apples are traditionally quartered and cooked into spicy pink preserves while retaining their shape, with a drop of red food coloring and whole cloves. Though some families prepare more lavish dishes, I like to keep the foods as close to their fresh goodness as possible. I serve the beans and spinach steamed, the scallions or chives raw, the pomegranate separated into seeds for easy eating, and the pumpkin cooked and mashed with a touch of sugar, spice, and soy milk.”

Follow *Appendix B: Indian Rosh Hashanah Seder*, which should already be printed for each student. Have students go around the table reading various parts. Lead them in performing each of the rituals listed.

Closure

(10 minutes)

Once the Seder is complete. Ask the students the following questions:

- ① What are some ways that a Rosh Hashanah Seder is similar to what you know of a Passover Seder?
- ① What are some ways that a Rosh Hashanah Seder is different from what you know of a Passover Seder?
- ① How have the Jews of India adapted this tradition to fit their community?

An interview with Rosy Moses Solomon, a long-time member of the Jewish community in Mumbai, India. ¹³

Q: India is home to one of the world's oldest Jewish communities. Tell us how Rosh Hashanah is celebrated there.

A: The celebration begins with the lighting of oil lamps and recitation of the b'racha before sundown. We hold New Year seders two nights, attended by close family and Jewish friends; in my case, around 25 people. The elders explain the significance of the seder components—fish, lamb's head, apple and honey, beet root, pumpkin, cluster beans, fresh garlic with leaves, pomegranate, Kiddush wine, challah (two flat chapattis, roasted crisp), dates (Ha'etz), and bananas (Ha'adama).



Before starting the service on the first night at home, we distribute the special Rosh Hashanah halwa. We have a hearty meal together, consisting of jeera rice, chicken or mutton curry, potatoes, kofta (meatball) curry, potato patties (stuffed with mince), and salads. We attend synagogue services starting at 7 am, most importantly to hear the Shofar, and then go home to do the Kiddush and Hamotsi, eat and rest a little. At about 5:30 pm we attend tashlich prayers near the sea where we would meet a lot of friends and family who go to other synagogues in Mumbai; this is a popular time for matchmaking and introducing young boys and girls. We then rush home for the second evening seder with our family.

Q: We loved your halwa recipe. Can you tell us about your other favorite dishes for the Jewish New Year?

A: The nankhatais (cookies)! We break the Fast of Gedalia (the day after Rosh Hashanah) with rice kheer—coarse basmati rice cooked with jaggery and coconut milk—after reading the Yizkor service (remembering the departed souls of close family). Before Yom Kippur we prepare Kalna puris—like a flaky pastry stuffed with lightly fried fine semolina, nuts, and raisins and deep fried in ghee. The afternoon before Yom Kippur we read the Yizkor service

¹³ <https://www.jdc.org/on-the-front-lines/archive/indian-rosh-hashanah-and-other-jewish-traditions/>

Rosh Hashanah Lesson 1: Indian Rosh Hashanah

Appendix A

and eat the Kalna puris, coconut-stuffed puris, and sandans. Before sunrise the day after Yom Kippur (Simhat Kohanim), we make gharis (like donuts). Between Yom Kippur and Hoshanah Rabah, we visit our relatives and friends to ask forgiveness for any wrong we may have done to them.

Q: Can you tell us more about your family's history in India? And any special holiday traditions that you have?

A: We had a house in a village named Galsur, a sea port in Maharashtra. We had rice fields and an oil press—operated manually by a bullock—that extracted oil from peanuts, sesame seeds, mustard seeds, and other herbal oils. We grew vegetables and fruit trees, and had poultry as well. Water had to be brought from wells, and we washed our clothes at a river or stream. There was no electricity then. Our house was a gathering spot for lots of our family during school vacations.

My in-laws lived in this house, with other retired family members. We, the younger generation with children, relocated to Mumbai much earlier, where we worked in offices and factories while our children attended recognized (and often English) schools where they received a superior education to that which was possible in the villages. Many of us Bene Israelis got our surnames from the villages our families had settled in hundreds and thousands of years ago. Later, family names were modified as people relocated to Mumbai.

Q: In your experience, what is the importance of JDC's role in India?

A: JDC has helped the Bene Israelis a lot, especially in bringing them closer. JDC supports the community's Jewish holiday celebrations, which includes sending people (through the JDC-supported Evelyn Peters Jewish Community Center in Mumbai) to conduct High Holiday services and seders in villages with synagogues such as Pen, Panvel, Alibag, and Nagaon.

Young and old are involved in JDC's activities: they created a Jewish old age home, gatherings for seniors, have year-round Torah and other Jewish classes, Gan Katan (kindergarten) for kids, and get-togethers for teenagers and young adults, who are also sponsored by JDC to take part in seminars in Israel and in Europe. This not only gives them a chance to learn a lot and mingle with other youngsters around the world, but now the world has started learning about Jewish life in India, too....

Rosh Hashanah Lesson 1: Indian Rosh Hashanah

Appendix A

Q: What would you like readers to know about Jewish life in India?

A: The Bene Israelis are peace loving people, characterized by strong family bonds and real caring. We have always been friendly with Hindus, Muslims, Catholics, Parsis; we never experienced any anti-Semitism. We observed and did not work on Shabbat. We walk to our synagogues, distance permitting; eat kosher food; and hang mezuzahs on our doorposts. We were known as Shanwar Tellis (oil pressers who did not work on Saturdays).

Though the Bene Israelis have a small prayer hall for the Reform or Liberal Jewish Congregation in Mumbai, the majority of the community still chooses to visit Orthodox synagogues because we love the melodious tunes that convey the essence of more than 2500 years of Jewish life in India. We, the Orthodox community, have several synagogues—I believe 8—in Mumbai. Prayers are conducted every day, morning and evening (including Minchah and Ma'ariv services). On Shabbat, we have a minyan and a bigger crowd, but many have to use the public transport or drive because of the distance.

Indian Rosh Hashanah Seder ¹⁴



The blessings in this ritual all begin with the words *yehiyu l'ratzon* (may it be God's will), and they all ask for divine gifts of bounty, strength, and peace. The ritual has come to be known as a Seder (order) because the blessings are recited in a specific order.

The origins of the ritual date back to the Talmud (Horayot 12a), where Abaye discusses omens that carry significance, and suggests that at the beginning of each new year, people should make a habit of eating the following foods that grow in profusion and so symbolize prosperity: pumpkin, a bean-like vegetable called rubia, leeks, beets, and dates.

Like the Passover Seder, where foods like bitter herbs and matzah symbolize suffering and freedom, at the Rosh Hashanah Seder the foods we eat also become vessels for meaning. Each food symbolizes a good wish for the coming year, and before each food is consumed there is a special blessing to recite, many of which result from puns on the food's Hebrew or Aramaic name. With each blessing, the mundane aspect of food is garnished with a sense of holiness, poignancy, and even humor.

We begin the Seder with a series of biblical verses invoking physical and spiritual blessings. They are repeated a prescribed number of times for mystical reasons.

The verses are followed by a piyyut, a religious poem, written by Abraham Hazzan Girondi in 13th-century Spain. Each verse of the poem has a chorus that declares, *Tikhleh shanah ve-*

¹⁴ <https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/a-sephardic-rosh-hashanah-seder/>

Rosh Hashanah Lesson 1: Indian Rosh Hashanah

Appendix B

killeloteha! Let the year end with all its curses! The last line reflects a change in tone: *Tahel shanah u-virkhoteha!* Let the new year begin with all its blessings!

Then come the blessings:

Before eating dates (tamar):

“May it be your will, God, that enmity will end.”

(Tamar resembles the word for end, yitamu.)

Before eating bananas:

“May it be you will, God, to provide fruit from the ground”

Before eating pomegranate:

“May we be as full of mitzvot as the pomegranate is full of seeds.”

Before eating apples and honey:

“May it be Your will, God, to renew for us a good and sweet year.”

Before eating green beans (rubia):

“May it be Your will, God, that our merits increase.”

(Rubia resembles the word for increase, yirbu.)

Before eating pumpkin or gourd (k’ra):

“May it be Your will, God, to tear away all evil decrees against us, as our merits are proclaimed before you.”

(K’ra resembles the words for “tear” and “proclaimed.”)

Before eating beet root (selek):

“May it be Your will, God, that all the enemies who might beat us will retreat, and we will beat a path to freedom.

(Selek resembles the word for retreat, yistalku)

Before eating leeks, chives, or scallions (karti):

“May it be Your will, God, that our enemies be cut off.

Rosh Hashanah Lesson 1: Indian Rosh Hashanah

Appendix B

(Karti resembles yikartu, the word for “cut off.”)

The Seder originally called for a fish or sheep’s head to symbolize our wish to be heads, not tails; leaders, not stragglers. The sheep’s head (the brains were removed and cooked) also served as a reminder of the ram that saved Isaac’s life; we recite the story of the binding of Isaac on the second day of Rosh Hashanah. Baghdadi Jews discontinued using the fish because its Hebrew name, dag, sounds like the Hebrew word for worry, d’agah.

In lieu of the sheep’s head, families that wish to reintroduce a wish for strong leadership might consider a head of lettuce as a vegetarian option.

While the blessings promulgating harm to enemies might be troubling today, they were originally created in times of external threat to many Jewish communities, and they embodied faith in a protective God.

The Seder ends as the *yehiyu l’ratzon* blessings segue right into the *Hamotzi*, probably the most common blessing over food — yet extraordinary in its acknowledgment of God as the source of all food.

The wish for God’s good will and favor, *ratzon*, extends into at least one Sephardic High Holiday piyyut by Judah Samuel Abbas (13th-century Spain) called *Et Sha’arei Ratzon* (Gates of Favor).

Listen to *Et Sha’arei Ratzon* [here](#).¹⁵

This long and heart-wrenching poem about the binding of Isaac visualizes the inner and outward journeys of father and son, complete with dialogue and piteous imaginings of Sarah’s reaction. Chanted before the blowing of the shofar on Rosh Hashanah mornings, it ends with a hope for salvation for all. The word *ratzon*, shared by both the Seder wishes and this piyyut, reflects our tender and vulnerable state during the High Holiday season, when we open our hearts to the expression of our deepest fears and desires.

Tahel shanah u’virkhotiha! Let the new year begin with all its blessings.

¹⁵ <https://shearithisrael.org/content/et-shaarei-ratzon-rosh-hashanah>

Kehillot haOlam: Rosh Hashanah

Lesson 2: Persian Rosh Hashanah Seder

Goals

- To facilitate the participation of the rituals associated with a Rosh Hashanah Seder in Iran.
- To help students cook items that are symbolic to Persian Jews around Rosh Hashanah.

Essential Questions

- What is a Rosh Hashanah Seder?
- How is a Rosh Hashanah Seder similar and different from a Passover Seder?
- How is a Persian Rosh Hashanah Seder similar and different from an Indian Rosh Hashanah Seder?
- How have the Jews of Iran adopted this tradition in ways that are authentic to who they are as a people?

Objectives (Students will be able to...)

- Compare and contrast a Rosh Hashanah Seder with a Passover Seder and with an Indian Rosh Hashanah Seder.
- List the symbolic items associated with a Rosh Hashanah Seder in Iran.
- Articulate the meaning of each of the items associated with a Rosh Hashanah Seder in Iran.

Supplies:

- Apples
- Honey
- Kara – Gourd or Squash
- Black-eyed peas
- Leeks
- Beetroot
- Dates
- Pomegranates
- Fish head
- Computer or phone with good audio capability

Other Things to Prepare:

- Set a table large enough to fit every student.
- Set a place setting that includes every item of the Iranian Seder plate and all of the items listed above. If there is something you cannot find (i.e. Fish head), simply print a photo of it online and place it on the Seder plates.
- Print copies of *Appendix A: A Persian Rosh Hashanah Seder Celebration* 1 per student.
- Print copies of The Persian Rosh Hashanah Seder from the Masorti Movement link below, 1 per student.
 - https://www.masorti.org.il/kehilot/uploads/ravsiach/editor_uploads/files/1441540522.pdf

Kehillot haOlam: Rosh Hashanah

Lesson 2: Persian Rosh Hashanah Seder

- Load the following songs onto a computer or phone with good audio capability.
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VjzQoH2rDY4>
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Picy0oaowlo>
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5FNEgoB5I1c>
- Copies of *Appendix B: Berosh Hashanah*, 1 per student

Kehillot haOlam: Rosh Hashanah

Lesson 2: Persian Rosh Hashanah Seder

Set Induction

(5 minutes)

Begin by reviewing what the students learned about the Rosh Hashanah Seder in India. Remind them of the items that are on a Seder plate, what each item means, the order of the Seder, and any other important aspect of the Indian Jewish community that was discussed last week. Explain that today they are going to experience a Rosh Hashanah Seder that has been adapted by the Jewish community in Iran.

Activity 1: Background on Persian Rosh Hashanah

(10 minutes)

Remind students that the Jews from Iran are called “Persian.” Pass out copies of *Appendix A: A Persian Rosh Hashanah Seder Celebration* to each student. Read it together as a class. This will give them some background on the Persian Jewish community before diving into the Seder itself.

If you would like to cook any of these items mentioned, the instructions are in the link provided in the footnote.

Activity 2: Persian Rosh Hashanah Seder

(45 minutes)

Follow The Persian Rosh Hashanah Seder from the Masorti Movement link below

- https://www.masorti.org.il/kehilot/uploads/ravsiach/editor_uploads/files/1441540522.pdf

Have students go around the table reading various parts. Lead them in performing each of the rituals listed.

Then, allow them to first watch this song (Berosh Hashanah) recorded on YouTube. Then, have them listen a second time while following along with the words using *Appendix B: B’rosh Hashanah*.

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Picy00aowlo>

- ② How does this song help us understand Rosh Hashanah and/or the Persian Jewish community?

Closure

(10 minutes)

Once the Seder is complete. Ask the students the following questions:

- ② What are some ways that a Persian Rosh Hashanah Seder is similar to an Indian Rosh Hashanah Seder?
- ② What are some ways that a Persian Rosh Hashanah Seder is different from an Indian Rosh Hashanah Seder?
- ② How have the Persian Jews adapted this tradition to fit their community?

Persian Rosh Hashanah ¹⁶

Reyna Simnegar, author of *Persian Food From the Non-Persian Bride*, insists that Persians will use any excuse to have a big party, and Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year, is a perfect example. While Seders are more often associated with Passover, in the Persian-Jewish community, it's customary to celebrate Rosh Hashanah with a similar ritual feast, complete with blessings, symbolic food, and an elaborate meal. While Jews from around the world practice many of the same traditions, Persians are known for their more formal Seder, and in fact, some in the community host a full Seder on both nights of Rosh Hashanah.

"It's one of my favorite things," says Simnegar, "because you would never expect to come to Rosh Hashanah dinner and have a Seder." And what does a Persian Rosh Hashanah Seder entail? According to Simnegar, who was born in Venezuela but married into a Persian family and mastered the cuisine with help from her mother-in-law, Persians are a fun-loving people and their Seders are more like parties than solemn services. "You joke around, you pass all the food, and people take turns saying the blessings. You can have a good time."



The Seder begins with kiddush, or blessing the wine, followed by more blessings said over symbolic foods. Most of the blessings, explains Simnegar, are plays on words, in which the Hebrew sounds like or relates to a particular food being eaten. There are nine symbolic foods: apples with honey, leeks, zucchini, black-eyed peas, lamb's head, beets, dates, a cow's lung, and pomegranate.

Although most of these foods are widely available in the United States, the lamb's head and cow's lungs can be hard to find. Tongue, a Persian favorite, is a common substitute for the lamb's head here in the States; lungs are often replaced with fish (because lung and fish flesh are both flaky and light) or popcorn (again, because of its lightness). Simnegar usually makes both; her children love the popcorn and she makes a spicy version with cumin and chopped green onion.

For Persian Rosh Hashanah seder, Simnegar recommends serving the nine symbolic dishes as appetizers. When hosting smaller gatherings, she sets up bento-box-style place settings so that each guest gets a little bit of each of the nine foods. For larger groups, she arranges

¹⁶ <https://www.epicurious.com/recipes-menus/a-persian-rosh-hashanah-seder-celebration-article>

Rosh Hashanah Lesson 2: Persian Rosh Hashanah

Appendix A

everything on platters for passing around the table. And that's just the beginning: After the symbolic foods, Persians eat challah bread and then feast on traditional dishes, including Persian chicken soup, one or more rice dishes, hearty and often sweet stews, potato salad, and dessert.

"In Persian culture," explains Simnegar, "even if we won't eat half of it, there has to be an overabundance of food." She prepares multiple dishes for the holiday, but insists her mother-in-law makes even more when she hosts, with three types of rice, four stews, and food from all over the world for dessert. And presentation is just as important as having plenty of food. Persians eat with their eyes, says Simnegar, so the table has to be very colorful and decorated with flowers.

For our streamlined Persian Rosh Hashanah Seder, Simnegar shared recipes for Persian Steamed White Rice, Quince Stew, and Persian Cream Puffs. Rice is essential to any Persian feast. Simnegar calls it "a canvas for everything else on your plate." This is a classic version that's boiled and then steamed to create an irresistible crunchy, golden crust.



Quince stew is one of Simnegar's favorite holiday dishes and fits perfectly with the Rosh Hashanah tradition of eating sweet dishes to symbolize a sweet year. If you can't find quinces, which are available at farmers' markets and Middle Eastern markets in the fall, use apples or Asian pears instead, waiting until the end of the cooking time to add them so they don't fall apart in the stew. With dinner, Simnegar offers guests a choice of red or white wine, and in keeping with the Rosh Hashanah tradition for consuming sweets, she serves fruit-forward wines, such as Jeunesse, a Central Coast Cabernet Sauvignon from Baron Herzog, and Bartenura Moscato, a "smooth and refreshing" Italian white.



Simnegar's cream puffs are very typical of Persian desserts, which are often classic French recipes with a Middle Eastern twist. They're drizzled in syrup made with honey, rosewater, saffron, and cardamom. The syrup takes just minutes to throw together and shouldn't be limited to the holiday table. Simnegar encourages you to use it as a garnish for purchased angel food or pound cake, so you can infuse even the most everyday dish with Persian flavor.

Rosh Hashanah Lesson 2: Persian Rosh Hashanah
Appendix B

Berosh Hashanah
by Schokolad Menta Mastik

HEBREW LYRICS	ENGLISH TRANSLATION
BeRosh Hashana, beRosh Hashana Parcha shoshana etzli bagina BeRosh Hashana sira levana Hifliga layam pit'om	Rosh Hashanah, Rosh Hashanah I had a rose in my garden New Year's Day white boat She sailed abruptly
BeRosh Hashana, beRosh Hashana Libenu ana bitfila noshana Sheyafa veshona tehe hashana Asher matchila hayom	Rosh Hashanah, Rosh Hashanah Our hearts answered with old prayer Beautiful and different this year Which begins today
BeRosh Hashana, beRosh Hashana Parcha anana birkia hastav BeRosh Hashana kener neshama Nidlak basade chatzav	Rosh Hashanah, Rosh Hashanah A blooming cloud in the fall sky Rosh Hashana violinist soul Lights up in a carving field
BeRosh Hashana, beRosh Hashana Libenu ana bitfila noshana Sheyafa veshona tehe hashana Asher matchila achshav	Rosh Hashanah, Rosh Hashanah Our hearts answered with old prayer Beautiful and different this year Which starts now.
BeRosh Hashana, beRosh Hashana Parcha mangina sheish lo hikir Vetoch yemama hazemer hama Mikol chalonot hair	Rosh Hashanah, Rosh Hashanah A tune flourished that no one knew And around the clock the vocal singer From all the city windows
BeRosh Hashana, beRosh Hashana Libenu ana bitfila noshana Sheyafa veshona tehe hashana Asher matchila beshir	Rosh Hashanah, Rosh Hashanah Our hearts answered with old prayer Beautiful and different this year Which begins with a song

Kehillot haOlam: Rosh Hashanah

Lesson 3: Diversity of *Shofarot*

Goals

- To review the different types of Shofar sounds used during Rosh Hashanah.
- To introduce the different kinds of *Shofarot* and their different sounds.
- To give students a broader perspective on *Shofarot* used throughout the world.

Essential Questions

- What are the different types of *Shofarot*?
- Why do certain communities use certain *Shofarot*?

Objectives (*Students will be able to...*)

- Articulate the names and sounds of the different shofar blasts.
- Compare and contrast the different types of *Shofarot*.

Supplies:

- 4 Large white poster boards
- 4 Sets of Markers
- 4 Scissors
- 4 Glue sticks

Other Things to Prepare:

- 1 Copy of *Appendix A: Shofarot*

Kehillot haOlam: Rosh Hashanah

Lesson 3: Diversity of *Shofarot*

Set Induction

(5 minutes)

Begin by reviewing the significance of the shofar blasts during Rosh Hashanah. Ask the students to review four different calls by name and sound:

- *Tekia* – This is one long note that acts as a summons.
- *Shevarim* - This word literally means “breaks” or “fractures.” The *shevarim* blast is three medium-length notes that have been compared to the sound of weeping.
- *T’ruah* - The *t’ruah* blast is a series of very short, staccato sounds that have been compared to an urgent alarm, calling us to rouse from our spiritual slumber.
- *Tekia Gedolah* - The long *tekiah gedolah* (or “great *tekiah*”) is similar to, but much longer than, the standard *tekiah*.

For more information, check out [this link](#). ¹⁷

Activity 1: Intro to Diversity of Shofarot

(10 minutes)

The Shofar is a horn used during Rosh Hashanah that is blown during prayers. The weeping, groaning sound of the Shofar is meant to move the congregants as they realize that they should be the ones weeping and groaning before God due to their misdeeds for the past year. Rosh Hashanah is considered the time when God judges every creature on earth and according to their deeds from the past year, their fate is decided regarding the coming year. ¹⁸

While most Shofarot are made from a ram’s horn, there are actually four different types. There are certain communities around the world that prefer one type over the others for a number of reasons.

Show students the photos from *Appendix A: Shofarot* which show each of the types:

- **Ram’s Horn Shofar** - The classic ram horn Shofars are by far the most common Shofars. It is used by both Ashkenazic and Sephardic communities and is made from the horn of a domestic ram. Most ram horn Shofars are light in color though black ones are available from black rams.
- **Yemenite Kudu’s Horn Shofar** - Yemenite Shofars are made from the horn of a kudu antelope and are therefore very long and typically of spiral shape.
- **Flat Ram’s Horn** - There are also flat ram horn Shofars that are typically used by Moroccan and German Jews. It is related that these were used due to persecution in the past when the Jews would need to hide the Shofar under their clothing. The shape of the flat ram horn Shofar is simple with an upturned end.
- **Bavli Shofars** - Bavli Shofars are natural, unfinished ram’s horns with a very deep sound and are typically used by Iraqi and Iranian Jews.

¹⁷ <https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/the-shofar-blasts/>

¹⁸ <https://www.myshofar.com/guides-myshofar/shofar-types>

Kehillot haOlam: Rosh Hashanah

Lesson 3: Diversity of *Shofarot*

🔍 Based on these photos, what is similar about these *shofarot*?

🔍 Based on these photos, what is different about these *shofarot*?

Activity 2: Shofar PSA

(40 minutes)

Shofarot serve as a tool to announce to the public that it is time to repent for your sins throughout this past year.

Break the students into four groups. Assign each group to create a Public Service Announcement about one of the types of *Shofarot* mentioned in Activity 1. They can gather research from their phones or on computers. The PSA should include a jingle that involves the shofar blasts and a visual presentation of all of the reasons why *their* assigned shofar is the best. Encourage them to be as creative as possible.

Pass out 1 poster board and markers to each group. They can also use the photos from *Appendix A: Shofarot* to decorate their poster or gain inspiration.

When the groups are done, allow them to present their PSA to the rest of the class.

Closure

(5 minutes)

Ask each student to answer one of the following questions based on their preference. Encourage them to think metaphorically:

“ I am like the *(fill in the blank) shofar* because....

“ I am like the *(fill in the blank) shofar* blast because...

Rosh Hashanah Lesson 2: Diversity of *Shofarot*
Appendix A



Rosh Hashanah Lesson 2: Diversity of *Shofarot*
Appendix A



Rosh Hashanah Lesson 2: Diversity of *Shofarot*
Appendix A



Rosh Hashanah Lesson 2: Diversity of *Shofarot*
Appendix A



Kehillot haOlam: Rosh Hashanah

Lesson 4: Authentic Assessment

Goals

- To synthesize and apply the learning from lessons 1-3.
- To create a Rosh Hashanah practice that feels authentic to them
- To honor the Rosh Hashanah practices that they have explored throughout this unit.

Essential Questions

- What have I learned from this unit?
- How can I take what I've learned into my life today?
- How can the learning from the unit impact my current Rosh Hashanah practice?

Objectives (*Students will be able to...*)

- Synthesize the learning and articulate their takeaways that occurred between lessons 1-3.
- Summarize how they plan to honor the Rosh Hashanah traditions learned throughout this unit.

Notes to the Educator

This lesson looks the same for every unit. While the content and number of lessons in each unit differ, this final lesson will include an authentic assessment of the student's choosing. This lesson lists some options for the students, however there are an endless number of options. As best you can (within reason) encourage students to think creatively regarding how they want to show their learning on this day. For many of these options, it is advised that they choose their authentic assessment assignment *before* the unit begins, as they may need to do things throughout the lessons to contribute to this assessment. Instruct them to do a different Authentic Assessment for each unit.

As the educator, you can also decide that every student does the same assignment but adjusts it to appeal to their needs and understanding of the material. If that is the case, it is advised that you choose 1 option per unit so that they do not duplicate assignments between units.

Refer to the Hanukkah Authentic Assessment on p. 199 for script.

Kehillot haOlam: Rosh Hashanah

Lesson 4: Authentic Assessment

Set Induction

(2 minutes)

Explain to the students that they will do an “authentic assessment” of the learning gained throughout this unit. An authentic assessment is a way for an educator to gauge what material was learned throughout a given time. Remind students that unlike in school where they are given tests, and papers, this authentic assessment, allows them to create something meaningful to them.

Let the students know that you will provide a list of authentic assessment ideas that they could do for this Rosh Hashanah Unit. They will see some of the same options each time as well as some variation for each unit; however, they must do different assessments for each one. The asterisk (*) indicates the assessments that are unique to the unit. If none of these ideas speak to the students, encourage them to bring in other ideas. There are only 2 criteria: it must show what they have learned in some way and it should be something that they are excited to create and share with the class.

Activity 1

(10-15 minutes)

Begin by reviewing what they have learned during this Rosh Hashanah Unit. Encourage students to list as many things as they can remember first, then you can jump in to remind them of details.

Lesson 1: Indian Rosh Hashanah Seder

Lesson 2: Persian Rosh Hashanah Seder

Lesson 3: Diversity of Shofarot

Activity 2

Now it is their turn to create something meaningful. Here is a list of options for them to choose from:

Host a Rosh Hashanah Seder *

- Host your own Rosh Hashanah Seder inspired by themes learned throughout this unit. Make sure to include items on your Seder plate that are meaningful and authentic to who you are and your beliefs of Rosh Hashanah.

Top Chef *

- Make a new dish combining ingredients from one of the Seders. Record yourself explaining the various elements used, offering insight on the items whenever possible.

Kehillot haOlam: Rosh Hashanah

Lesson 4: Authentic Assessment

Explore other Rosh Hashanah Practices *

- Cuban Jews eat 12 grapes on Rosh Hashanah

Vision Board

- Using magazines, paper, scissors and glue, create a collage board that includes ideas learned throughout this lesson. This should somehow illustrate how you plan to bring these global Rosh Hashanah practices to life.

Blog Post

- Write a blog post that illustrates your three main takeaways from this unit. What did you learn and how has it impacted your Jewish identity? What questions do you still have? What are you most looking forward to exploring further?

Vlog

- Similar to the blog, record yourself discussing your three main takeaways from this unit. You could even bring in video clippings from previous lessons to better illustrate your learning.

Instagram Story

- Using your Instagram or a new Instagram account, document the variety of activities that we did throughout this unit. This can be done as the lessons are taught and/or something larger at the end to summarize.

Song Playlist

- Create a playlist of Rosh Hashanah music. This can be comprised of already existing Jewish music for Rosh Hashanah or secular songs that focus on Rosh Hashanah themes. Publish the playlist somewhere (perhaps the synagogues website and/or social media page) so that others can enjoy these songs.

Cooking

- Cook a dish involving apple and/or honey that symbolize a sweet new year to come. Creatively explain each food's origin and share some of the community's history in which it derives.

Organize a Service

- Inspired by ideas learned about Rosh Hashanah around the world, create a Shabbat service for the synagogue. This could include various songs, texts and food for Shabbat Oneg.

Kehillot haOlam: Rosh Hashanah

Lesson 4: Authentic Assessment

Interview

- Find someone who is of a different Jewish origin than you. Interview them about their family's history and any unique customs, traditions or rituals associated with Rosh Hashanah within their family.

Closure

Create a way for the students to all present their authentic assessments to one another. You can invite the students' families, clergy team, board members of the congregation, or keep it intimate with just the class. It could also be simply asking students to give an elevator pitch of the learning from the Authentic Assessment they created outside of class.

UNIT 3: **SUKKOT &** **SIMCHAT TORAH**

Kehillot haOlam: Sukkot and Simchat Torah

Lesson 1: India

Goals

- To understand how the *Khirichan San* tradition fits into Indian *Sukkot*.
- To prepare and eat corn and coconut pudding – a *Sukkot* tradition in the Indian Jewish community.
- To learn some Bollywood dances often performed during Indian Simchat Torah.

Essential Questions

- Why is *Sukkot* in India considered “The Pudding Holiday?”
- How is the Jewish community in India’s connected to Bollywood?
- How does Bollywood help Indian Jews connect to the celebration of *Simchat Torah*?

Objectives (Students will be able to...)

- Compare and contrast their understanding of *Sukkot* and *Simchat Torah* with the ways in which these holidays are celebrated in India.
- Articulate why *Sukkot* in India is considered “The Pudding Holiday.”
- Perform 10 traditional Bollywood dance moves.

Supplies:

- Incense
- Matches
- Ingredients for *Khir* (*serves 3-4 people*)
 - 1 cup fresh yellow sweet corn off the cob
 - 3/4 cup Arborio rice
 - 1/3 cup muscovado sugar or jaggery (gud)
 - 5-6 pod cardamom, seeds crushed
 - 3 cups whole or 2% milk
 - 10-12 strands of saffron
 - 2 tablespoons melted ghee
 - 2 tablespoons cashew nuts broken
 - 2 tablespoons Raisins
- Tape
- Computer with audio and internet access
- Projector
- Torah, real or plush

Other Things to Prepare

- Read about the Bnei Menashe community in India before this session:
 - <https://shavei.org/communities/bnei-menashe/>
- Print copies of *Appendix A: Khir*, 1 per student
- Print 1 copy of *Appendix B: Sukkot in India*, in color. Tape them on the walls around the room, gallery-style.
- Load the following link on a computer with audio and internet access (Shalom Bollywood Trailer):

Kehillot haOlam: Sukkot and Simchat Torah

Lesson 1: India

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sDZYS8xgQDg>
- Load the following link on a computer with audio and internet access (How to do Bollywood Dance Moves):
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nJomaICKKEI>
- (Optional) Print Copies of *Appendix C: Jews in Bollywood*, 1 per student.

Kehillot haOlam: Sukkot and Simchat Torah

Lesson 1: India

Set Induction

(10 minutes)

Begin by having the students brainstorm everything they know about the Holiday of *Sukkot*. Write their responses on the board. Ideas include but are not limited to:

- Sukkot translates to “booths.”
- Jews build a sukkah that they dwell in during the 8 days of Sukkot
- These sukkot are reminiscent of the temporary huts the Israelites built while wondering the desert.
- We shake a lulav (willow, myrtle, and palm frond) and etrog (lemon-like fruit) in all directions while in the sukkah
- It is a mitzvah to invite guests into your sukkah.

Activity 1: *Khiricha San*

(45 minutes)

Explain that According to “Who Are the Jews of India” by Nathan Katz, Sukkot observance was not a part of Indian Jewish life for many centuries. Instead, they celebrated *Khiricha San* (“pudding holiday”) – a parallel festival centered around a corn and coconut milk-sweetened pudding that maintained Sukkot’s harvest theme. A censer with frankincense would be placed near the dish and the Khir was eaten by the family after saying Shema. By the mid-19th century, however, Indian Jews were reintroduced to the holiday and began to erect sukkahs constructed from coconut palm branches.

Before exploring Sukkot in India today, begin by traveling back in time to create *Khiricha San* pudding.

Pass out copies of Appendix A: *Khir* pudding to each study. Either make the dish as a class or break the class into smaller groups to make smaller batches.

Before you eat the dish, burn the incense and recite the Shema prayer as a class. As students are eating, ask the following questions:

- Ⓜ How did it feel to recite the Shema before eating the *Khir*?
- Ⓜ Did it feel any differently than when you have recited *haMotzi* before eating? How does it compare?
 - *HaMotzi explicitly thanks God for the food you are about to eat. The Shema does not.*
- Ⓜ How does the smell of incense enhance this experience of eating *Khir*?
- Ⓜ How would eating this dish, and smelling the incense, in a Sukkah be similar and different to eating it inside?

Kehillot haOlam: Sukkot and Simchat Torah

Lesson 1: India

Activity 2: Sukkot in India Today

(20 minutes)

Explain that the photos around the room are from the Bnei Menashe community in the Churachandpur area of India, which is in the southwestern corner of the Indian state of Manipur.

For more information about the Bnei Menashe community, check out:

<https://shavei.org/communities/bnei-menashe/>

Allow students to walk around and look closely at each of the photos of Sukkot in India from *Appendix B: Sukkot in India*. Once they have looked at each of them. Instruct them to stand by the one they are drawn to the most. Have them describe what it is they see in each of the photos in as much detail as possible. Then have them share why they were drawn to that particular photo. Ask the following questions to the group:

- ❓ What can you learn about Sukkot in India from these photos?
- ❓ How is sukkot in India similar and different from how we celebrate it here?

Activity 3: History of Jews in Bollywood

(10 minutes)

Explain that *Simchat Torah* is the holiday that occurs at the end of *Sukkot*. It is customary to dance around with the Torah because this holiday celebrates the new Torah reading cycle. Bollywood dancing is the dance-form used in many Indian films and is often the style of dance that Indian Jews perform during Simchat Torah. It is a mixture of many styles including belly-dancing, kathak, Indian folk, Western popular, and "modern", jazz, and even Western erotic dancing.

Before learning a Bollywood dance, explore the history of Jews in Bollywood by watching the trailer to the documentary film, *Shalom Bollywood*, using this link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sDZYS8xgQDg>

If you would like to learn more about the Jews in Bollywood, pass out copies of *Appendix C: Jews in Bollywood*, and read it together as a class.

Activity 4: Learn Bollywood Dance Moves

(20 minute)

Clear space for the students to dance and play the following video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nJomaICKKEI>

Instruct them to follow along with Manpreet (the instructor) as she explains each of the moves. Once students have learned the dance moves, bring out the real or plush Torah. Have students practice the dance moves as they dance around the Torah

Kehillot haOlam: Sukkot and Simchat Torah

Lesson 1: India

Closure

(5 minutes)

Once students have learned the dance moves, bring out the real or plush Torah. Have students practice the dance moves as they dance around the Torah. Here is a playlist of music for them to dance to: <https://gaana.com/playlist/gaana-dj-hindi-top-50-1>

Then, ask the students:

- Ⓜ How did it feel to dance around the *Torah* to Bollywood music?

Khbir Pudding
(Serves 3-4 people)

Ingredients

- 1 cup fresh yellow sweet corn off the cob
- 3/4 cup Arborio rice
- 1/3 cup muscovado sugar or jaggery (gud)
- 5-6 pod cardamom, seeds crushed
- 3 cups whole or 2% milk
- 10-12 strands of saffron
- 2 tablespoons melted ghee
- 2 tablespoons cashew nuts broken
- 2 tablespoons Raisins



Instructions

1. Wash the arborio rice well, combine with the shucked corn and 2 cups of the milk & cook in a heavy bottom pan till the rice is well cooked and mushy. (You may alternatively pressure cook it)
2. Warm the extra cup of milk. Remove 1/4 cup of this and dissolve the strands of saffron. Add back into the milk & set aside.
3. Add the sugar/jaggery and the cardamom powder to the rice & corn mixture and combine till the sugar melts. Adding the extra saffron infused milk, continue cooking the pudding on a low flame, till it thickens.
4. In a separate skillet, heat the ghee and fry the cashew nuts & raisins till golden brown. Stir into the pudding & serve warm or cold as per your preference.
5. Enjoy!

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Appendix B



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When Jew's Ran... Bollywood? ¹⁹

Ever since the first Jewish-run studios made cinema what it is today, Hollywood has, for better or for worse, long been associated with the Jews. Bollywood? Not so much. The over-the-top action sequences and large-scale dance numbers of India's massive Hindustani-language film industry are recognizable across the world, but most Westerners probably don't know that many of the industry's early female stars were actually Jewish.

These actresses include some of the most famous names in Indian cinema: silent-era star Sulochana; cousins Miss Rose and Pramila (who was also the first post-independence Miss India); and Nadira. Now, their story is being told in a new documentary, "Shalom Bollywood," now screening at Jewish film festivals worldwide.

"I knew there were Indian Jews, but that there were Jewish Bollywood superstars was a surprise," Australia-based director and academic Danny Ben-Moshe told *The Times of Israel* in a phone call from Melbourne.

The surprises began for Ben-Moshe over a decade ago, when his research assistant showed him an obituary for Nadira, who died in 2006. Initially he wanted to make a film exclusively about her, but when he subsequently visited India for the first time, he learned that there had been other Jewish Bollywood stars and widened his focus.

"Someone would ask, 'But what about Pramila?' Someone else would ask, 'What about Sulochana?'" recalled Ben-Moshe, who also produced and wrote the film. "Nadira was not just a great Jewish actress, she was the last in a long line of Jewish female stars in particular, that went all the way back to the earliest days of Indian cinema."

The project took 11 years to complete. Ben-Moshe obtained rare archival film footage from India and interviewed surviving family members of the stars — including Rose's granddaughter Rachel Reuben and Pramila's son Haider Ali, who are both in the film business themselves. Ben-Moshe even found late-in-life interview footage of Pramila, who died in 2006, the same year as Nadira.

The film also explores the history of Jewish men in Bollywood, such as the late star David Abraham Cheulkar, known to fans as Uncle David. Ben-Moshe found film footage of Uncle David and interviewed his niece Diana Abraham and nephew Victor Abraham.

Ben-Moshe said that the film has been "really well-received," including at its world premiere last October at the Mumbai International Film Festival. "I imagined, for an Indian audience, it would be a different story and approach, but it had a very positive Indian response," Ben-Moshe said.

¹⁹ <https://www.timesofisrael.com/when-jews-ran-bollywood/>

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A March Houston screening coincided with Indian art exhibits at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, and an Indian photography exhibition of the film's subject matter at Congregation Beth Israel.

When he embarked on “Shalom Bollywood,” he had not seen a Bollywood movie and did not consider himself an aficionado of the historic Indian film industry. Bollywood, according to online data, leads the world in terms of production.

Ben-Moshe explored the complicated story of gender roles in the early days of Bollywood. As the film recounts, men played female roles at the outset, as it was taboo for Hindu and Muslim women to act in movies. This opened the door for Indian Jewish actresses.

The film details the story of Jews in India — including two historic communities: the Bene Israel and the Baghdadi Jews, whose roots lie in the Middle East, with an emphasis on the Iraqi capital.

Ben-Moshe described Baghdadi Jews as educated members of high society, familiar with the films of another burgeoning industry: Hollywood. Most Indian Jewish actresses came from the Baghdadi Jewish community, Ben-Moshe said.

Last year, Ben-Moshe was among those interviewed for the BBC podcast “Jewish Queens of Bollywood,” which delved into the origins and careers of its title subjects. According to this podcast, Baghdadi Jews came to India in the late 18th century and created a flourishing community in the 19th century. Its members spoke Arabic, Hebrew and English — but not necessarily Hindustani, which presented a problem for Sulochana when silent films transitioned to “talkies.”

A Nascent Industry

India's burgeoning film capital was located on its west coast. At the time, it was called Bombay and, according to the podcast, would see its Jewish population number over 30,000 in the 1940s. The name “Bollywood,” a combination of “Bombay” and “Hollywood,” was first used in the 1970s.

“Mumbai is the film hub,” Ben-Moshe told The Times of Israel, referring to the city's official name since 1995. He added that the presence of Jews in the metropolis meant that they would have “a big part to play” in the film industry. The pioneer was Sulochana — born Ruby Myers in 1907 — who was improbably discovered while working as a telephone operator.

“A director was scouting out a venue [for a film],” Ben-Moshe said. “He was blown away by her looks, her eyes.” In fact, her new stage name meant “the one with the beautiful eyes.”



(Sulchana)

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“Life is often chance and circumstance,” Ben-Moshe reflected. “Had she not been working there, had he chosen a different location, maybe things would have evolved differently and there would have been no Sulochana.” Audiences were amazed by this versatile actress, who played eight roles in the 1927 film “Wildcat of Bombay” — from a gentleman from Hyderabad to a street urchin to a European blonde. Off the set, she was reported to have driven India’s first Rolls-Royce, and to have out-earned the British viceroy. Mahatma Gandhi included her image while campaigning for Indian independence from the British Empire.

Sulochana was joined by other Indian Jewish actresses. Miss Rose, or Rose Ezra, had endured a divorce and financial difficulties before finding silent-screen success in the 1920s. Rose’s cousin Pramila, who was born Esther Victoria Abraham, began her long career in the 1930s. Sulochana and Pramila would go on to become producers as well.



(Pramila)

All grown up

The ‘30s were a key decade for Indian cinema. Sound — and the dancing format that has characterized Bollywood ever since — was introduced in 1931 with “Alam Ara,” written by Indian Jewish playwright David Joseph Penkar. In 1932, another Indian Jew, Ezra Mir (born Edwin Myers), created a sensation with “Zarina,” which included a record 86 kiss scenes.

The next decade brought partition with Pakistan and independence from Great Britain in 1947. That year, Indians had a national heroine to celebrate when Pramila became the new country’s first Miss India.

Post-independence Jewish Indian star Nadira was born Florence (or Farhat) Ezekiel Nadira, and debuted as Princess Rajshree in the 1952 film “Aan.”



(Nadira)

“They would go where others were not prepared to go,” Ben-Moshe said of the actresses. “They were sassy, uninhibited. They would not just go on screen, they would embrace that other role, the vampy role. They were self-confident, brave, pioneers, larger-than-life characters.”

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Lost Art

But Ben-Moshe said that finding film footage of these actresses is difficult. “Of the Sulochana and Rose films from the silent era, the ‘20s, there was nothing,” Ben-Moshe said.

“From the ‘30s films of Rose, Sulochana, Pramila, there was a little bit. Basically, Nadira, of the Jewish stars, is the only one with a comprehensive collection of film, and David [Uncle David]. It’s a shame. It’s Jewish cultural heritage, Indian cultural heritage,” he said.

Ben-Moshe said that the actresses profiled in the film were “proud Jews, proud Indians, proud public figures.”

Pramila taught the Shema to her son, actor-director Haider Ali. In the film, he praises his mother’s Jewish cooking, and shares her recipe for Moroccan chicken soup.



(Uncle David)

“They [the actresses] went to synagogue or kept certain [customs] on the High Holidays,” Ben-Moshe said. “Nadira used to wait, when she was older, for the Shabbat meal, which was brought from the local community.” And, he said, “They had no problem being Indian as well. It’s such a diverse society.”

Pramila married Muslim Bollywood star Kumar (Syed Hassan Ali Zaidi), and their children grew up in an interfaith household, although the marriage foundered when Kumar went to Pakistan following its independence, according to the film.

In India, Ben-Moshe said, “There are so many different languages, regions, religions, castes... India is unique in the world, with no history of anti-Semitism.” However, after Indian independence, the majority of its Jews emigrated. Nadira’s family moved to Israel, as did many other Indian Jews. Today, Ben-Moshe said, there are hardly any Jews left.

Many Jews in Bollywood would find recognition from their country, including national awards. Sulochana would be honored with India’s highest cinema award, the Dadasaheb Phalke, in 1973, and with a postage stamp after her death in 1983. But she and other Jewish stars faced difficulties later in life, including poverty and loneliness, as opportunities disappeared.

Asked about prospects for a next generation, Ben-Moshe said, “My prediction is that the history has already been written. But it only takes one [to create a new trend].”

And, he said, “Shalom Bollywood” has “spurred curiosity, more talk and discussion about the films of Jewish stars.”

Kehillot haOlam: Sukkot and Simchat Torah

Lesson 2: Ethiopian *Sigd*

Goals

- To introduce the holiday of *Sigd*.
- To read the texts surrounding the *Sigd* ritual.
- To help the students gain a broader understanding of Ethiopian Jews in Israel.

Essential Questions

- How is Ethiopian *Sigd* similar to and different from Simchat Torah?
- Why is *Sigd* significant to Ethiopian Jews living in Israel?

Objectives (Students will be able to...)

- Compare and contrast the Ethiopian with their understanding of Simchat Torah
- Articulate the practice and significance of *Sigd* for the Ethiopian Jewish community.
- Explore the texts often read during the *Sigd* ceremony.

Supplies:

- Computer with audio and internet access
- Projector

Other Things to Prepare

- Print copies of *Appendix A: Ethiopian Sigd*, 1 per student
- Preload this link onto a computer
 - https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=204&v=UHRVTaLZQxM&feature=emb_logo
- Print copies of *Appendix B: Sigd Ceremony*, 1 per student.

Note to the Educator

- There is a great Netflix video called *The Red Sea Diving Resort* that documents the story of Ethiopian Jews being smuggled into Israel during the 1980's. I chose not to include that in this lesson because it deflects from the topic of Simchat Torah but if you would like to explore the Ethiopian Jewish story further, that is a great place to start.

Kehillot haOlam: Sukkot and Simchat Torah

Lesson 2: Ethiopian *Sigd*

Set Induction

(10 minutes)

Begin by having the students brainstorm everything they know about the Holiday of Simchat Torah. Write their responses on the board. Ideas include but are not limited to:

- Simchat Torah is the holiday that celebrates a new Torah cycle.
- Simchat Torah celebrations often involve dancing around with the Torah.
- There are seven *Hakafot* (cycles of Torah reading and dancing) during Simchat Torah.
- Simchat Torah occurs after Sukkot.
- During Simchat Torah we read the last section of the Torah and then the first section of the Torah.

Activity 1: *Sigd* Introduction

(30 minutes)

Explain that Simchat Torah is celebrated in unique ways all around the world. The Jews of Ethiopia celebrate a holiday called *Sigd*. While it is not exactly a Simchat Torah celebration, it is similar in many ways.

Pass out copies of *Appendix A: Ethiopian Sigd*, to each student. Read it together as a class and then ask the following questions:

- ❓ What does “*Sigd*” mean?
- ❓ When does *Sigd* take place?
- ❓ How is *Sigd* celebrated in the Ethiopian Jewish community?
- ❓ How is *Sigd* similar and different from our understanding of Simchat Torah?
- ❓ What strikes you about this description of the origins and meaning of *Sigd*?
- ❓ Do you think the message of *Sigd* is specific to the Ethiopian Jewish experience or universal?

Sigd is celebrated on the 29th of Heshvan, or Hadar, as the month is known by Beta Yisrael (Ethiopian Jews). This date is seven weeks after Yom Kippur, signifying the renewal of the covenant between God, the Jewish people, and the Torah.

*[Note: Shavuot, which falls seven weeks after Pesach, is celebrated primarily as an agricultural festival. Its celebration connected to the receiving the Torah is not explicit in the Torah text, therefore this association was unknown to the Beta Yisrael community, who had no access to the oral tradition.]*²⁰

²⁰http://www.behrmanhouse.com/sites/default/files/lessons/pdf/Ethiopian%20Sigd%20part%20of%20national%20heritage_o.pdf

Kehillot haOlam: Sukkot and Simchat Torah

Lesson 2: Ethiopian *Sigd*

Activity 2: *Sigd* in Israel Today

(15 minutes)

The current Beta Yisrael ritual act of renewal on a mountaintop that occurs on *Sigd* is reminiscent of the treaty made for the People of Israel by Ezra and Nehemiah upon the return from Babylonian exile in the 5th century BCE. In the 1980's and 1990's the Israeli government performed many top-secret missions to airlift thousands Ethiopian Jews to seek refuge from genocide in Israel. With so many Ethiopian Jews now residing in Israel, *Sigd* has become a national holiday.

Take a few minutes to view the following video:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=204&v=UHRVTaLZQxM&feature=emb_logo

The video indicates that the acknowledgement of Beta Yisrael's unique holiday has moved them closer to cultural acceptance in Israel. Instruct students to think of an example of a group of people with a distinct culture who live within a larger social group and try to maintain their identity.

- ❓ What problems do those groups encounter?
- ❓ What are the some of the issues preventing Beta Yisrael from being absorbed more fully into Israeli society?
- ❓ Why is it so significant that *Sigd* is celebrated as a national holiday in Israel?

Activity 3: *Sigd* Ceremony

(30 minutes)

The holiday ritual involves reading Jewish text about "The Revelation at Sinai" (Exodus 19:16-20:17), excerpts from the book of Nehemiah (Nehemiah 8:1-6, Nehemiah 8:8-13, Nehemiah 9:1-3, Nehemiah 10:29-34) and Psalms 122.

Pass out copies of *Appendix B: Sigd Ceremony*, 1 per student. Read the texts as a group and then ask the questions provided in the appendix.

Other ways to explore these texts:

- *You can also break the class into groups to read one section each and then discuss their thoughts with the larger group.*
- *Make posters of each of the texts and then place them on large post it notes on the walls. Allow students to walk around writing their own personal commentary on each of the texts and on each other's comments*
- *Have students pair up (hevruta-style) to explore either a text that you assign them or a text that they choose.*

Some discussion questions could include:

- ❓ Why do you think the reading of the revelation at Sinai is a traditional part of the *Sigd* ceremony?
- ❓ The ceremony described here in the Book of Nehemiah is considered by many Ethiopian Jews to be the original inspiration for the festival of *Sigd*. How does

Kehillot haOlam: Sukkot and Simchat Torah

Lesson 2: Ethiopian *Sigd*

the description of the ceremony in Nehemiah relate to the message of *Sigd*? In what ways does it parallel, and in what ways does it differ?

- ⌚ How does the ceremony in Nehemiah strike you? What do you think about the juxtaposition of fasting and penitence with celebration - a trait also found in *Sigd* ceremonies?
- ⌚ These poetic additions are ancient. They may even predate *Sigd* in its modern form. What do you think about them?
- ⌚ Why do you think these poems have such an emphasis on Jerusalem and the Temple? What connections can you make between the Temple and *Sigd*

Closure

(10 minutes)

Ask the students to share the answer to the following question. This can also be done as a journal prompt.

- ⌚ Think of a time when it was difficult for you to celebrate a Jewish holiday. What was preventing you from celebrating that holiday and how did you overcome this struggle? How has learning about *Sigd* influenced this reflection?

Ethiopian Sigd

Sigd is an Amharic word meaning “prostration” or “worship” and is the commonly used name for a holiday celebrated by the Ethiopian Jewish community on the 29th of the Hebrew month of Cheshvan. This date is exactly 50 days after Yom Kippur, usually falling out in late October or November, and according to Ethiopian Jewish tradition is also the date that God first revealed himself to Moses.

Qess Berhan, the last High Priest of the Gondar region, recounted a specific historical process [for the origin of Sigd]. On various occasions, he gave two different versions.

In one of these, he said that the Sigd was created at a time of peace which came after wars in which Beta Israel had suffered greatly. A Christian king, Gabra Maskel of the Axumite kingdom, who was friendly toward Beta Israel, allowed the Jewish king Gideon to institute the Sigd. Two priests, Azarias and Zadok, decided to celebrate the holiday, so that the people who still remembered their suffering would pray that their lot improve. Qess Berhan added that this was after the wars of Gudit, the legendary queen who destroyed many Christian institutions and greatly weakened the Axumite kingdom while at the head of an army of Agau soldiers.

The second version of the history of the Sigd... was also apparently related by Qess Berhan. According to this version, the Sigd was initiated by Qessotch and monks in the fifteenth century in a period of severe persecution. Those religious leaders created the holiday in order "to soften the heart of the Ethiopian kings... In this time of persecution (so goes the story) these monks and priests retreated into the wilderness and appealed to God for comfort and mercy as well as strength to resist the Ethiopian Amhara kings." This explanation fits well with what we know of the Beta Israel view of its history and illustrates how the holiday reflects their perception of the community's situation and needs at the time.

Whatever the actual historical process behind the institution of the Sigd, it is interesting to take note of the comment of two informants on the impetus that led to the observance of the Sigd.

"Ezra gathered the people after they had returned from Babylon... when the people had left the observance of the Commandments... and had little by little become like the non-Jews. Thus Ezra the Scribe gathered the people and demanded from them... the making of a new covenant between the people and the Torah... that the great catastrophe that had come before should not occur to them... and our people took this as an example as if it were a Commandment from the Torah or the Prophets that it is forbidden to assimilate, that one must observe the Commandments..."

The same informant stated on another occasion. "It may be that they [the priests and/or monks] began to practice it [the Sigd] at a later time when they saw after all the wars that the Falashas had with the kings, that because of all the suffering that the people endured, they were leaving the Torah and Commandments. So they took the example of Ezra and endured this."

Or, in the words of another informant, "Our fathers in the land of the exile... suffered and learned lessons from their suffering. They appealed to God in fasting, prayers, and

Sukkot and Simchat Torah Lesson 2: Ethiopian Sigd

Appendix A

prostration, to warn the people not to stray from the Haymanot [the laws and basic principles of belief among Beta Israel], to listen to the warnings of the Torah because of the destruction of Jerusalem. Therefore, they imitated the gathering, as was done by Ezra and Nehemiah, that this goal should not be lost, and that it not only be for one time, but rather every year."

These and similar statements indicate that the creation of the Sigd should be viewed as a reaction to and a reflection of the way in which the community perceived itself to be threatened with loss of its identity, as a result of both wars and assimilation.

(Ethiopian Jews and Israel, Michael Ashkenazi and Alex Weingrod, 1987, emphasis added) ²¹

Traditionally on Sigd, members of the Ethiopian Jewish community would fast for a day during which they would meet in the morning and walk together to the highest point on a mountain. The "Kessim," spiritual leaders of the community, would carry the "Orit," the Ethiopian Torah, which is written in the ancient Geez language and comprised of the Five Books of Moses, the Prophetic writings, and other writings such as Song of Songs and Psalms. The Kessim recited parts of the Orit, including the Book of Nehemiah. On that day, members of the community recited Psalms and remembered the Torah, its traditions, and their desire to return to Jerusalem. In the afternoon they would descend back to the village and break their fast, dance and rejoice in a sort of seder reminiscent of Passover.

The holiday symbolizes the Jewish covenant in receiving the Torah at Mount Sinai in addition to the reacceptance of the Torah that was led by Ezra the Scribe before the construction of the Second Temple. Its date is analogous to the 50 days which are counted between Passover and Shavuot when the Torah was given on Mount Sinai.

The Ethiopian community in Israel has been celebrating the holiday by holding a mass ceremony on Mount Zion in Jerusalem, topped with a procession to the Western Wall. Recently, the ceremony has been held in Jerusalem's Armon Hanatziv Promenade.

In February 2008, MK Uri Ariel submitted legislation to the Knesset that would see Sigd established as an Israeli national holiday. In July of that year the Knesset followed Ariel's suggestion and added Sigd to the list of State holidays. The law states that in addition to being a state holiday, the Sigd would also be marked in a special assembly organized by the Ministry of Education. The holiday's history, traditions and ceremonies will be included in the educational system's curriculum and going to work during the holiday will be optional.

In 2010, Israeli President Shimon Peres led the annual Sigd celebration with a ceremony at his residence in Jerusalem. In 2013, the national Sigd celebration in Jerusalem was attended by thousands of Ethiopian Jews as well as Jerusalem Mayor Nir Barkat, Minister Sofa Landver, Minister Shai Piron, Sephardi Chief Rabbi Yitzhak Yosef and numerous other special guests. ²²

²¹ <https://www.sefaria.org/sheets/84521.2?lang=bi&with=all&lang2=en>

²² <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/ethiopian-sigd-holiday>

Sukkot and Simchat Torah Lesson 2: Ethiopian Sigd

Appendix B

Sigd Ceremony

Exodus 19:16-20:17

- (16) On the third day, as morning dawned, there was thunder, and lightning, and a dense cloud upon the mountain, and a very loud blast of the horn; and all the people who were in the camp trembled.
- (17) Moses led the people out of the camp toward God, and they took their places at the foot of the mountain.
- (18) Now Mount Sinai was all in smoke, for Adonai had come down upon it in fire; the smoke rose like the smoke of a kiln, and the whole mountain trembled violently.
- (19) The blare of the horn grew louder and louder. As Moses spoke, God answered him in thunder.
- (20) Adonai came down upon Mount Sinai, on the top of the mountain, and Adonai called Moses to the top of the mountain and Moses went up.
- (21) Adonai said to Moses, "Go down, warn the people not to break through to Adonai to gaze, lest many of them perish.
- (22) The priests also, who come near the Adonai, must stay pure, lest Adonai break out against them."
- (23) But Moses said to Adonai, "The people cannot come up to Mount Sinai, for You warned us saying, 'Set bounds about the mountain and sanctify it.'"
- (24) So Adonai said to him, "Go down, and come back together with Aaron; but let not the priests or the people break through to come up to Adonai, lest He break out against them."
- (25) And Moses went down to the people and spoke to them.
- (1) God spoke all these words, saying:
- (2) I Adonai am your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, the house of bondage:
- (3) You shall have no other gods besides Me.
- (4) You shall not make for yourself a sculptured image, or any likeness of what is in the heavens above, or on the earth below, or in the waters under the earth.
- (5) You shall not bow down to them or serve them. For I Adonai your God am an impassioned God, visiting the guilt of the parents upon the children, upon the third and upon the fourth generations of those who reject Me,
- (6) but showing kindness to the thousandth generation of those who love Me and keep My commandments.
- (7) You shall not swear falsely by the name of Adonai your God; for Adonai will not clear one who swears falsely by God's name.
- (8) Remember the sabbath day and keep it holy.
- (9) Six days you shall labor and do all your work,
- (10) but the seventh day is a sabbath of Adonai your God: you shall not do any work—you, your son or daughter, your male or female slave, or your cattle, or the stranger who is within your settlements.
- (11) For in six days Adonai made heaven and earth and sea, and all that is in them, and He rested on the seventh day; therefore Adonai blessed the sabbath day and hallowed it.
- (12) Honor your father and your mother, that you may long endure on the land that Adonai your God is assigning to you.
- (13) You shall not murder. You shall not commit adultery. You shall not steal. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.
- (14) You shall not covet your neighbor's house: you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his male or female slave, or his ox or his ass, or anything that is your neighbor's.
- (15) All the people witnessed the thunder and lightning, the blare of the horn and the mountain smoking; and when the people saw it, they fell back and stood at a distance.
- (16) "You speak to us," they said to Moses, "and we will obey; but let not God speak to us, lest we die."
- (17) Moses answered the people, "Be not afraid; for God has come only in order to test you, and in order that the fear of God may be ever with you, so that you do not go astray." ²³

Sukkot and Simchat Torah Lesson 2: Ethiopian Sigd

Appendix B

Nehemiah 8:1-6

- (1) the entire people assembled as one man in the square before the Water Gate, and they asked Ezra the scribe to bring the scroll of the Teaching of Moses with which Adonai had charged Israel.
- (2) On the first day of the seventh month, Ezra the priest brought the Teaching before the congregation, men and women and all who could listen with understanding.
- (3) He read from it, facing the square before the Water Gate, from the first light until midday, to the men and the women and those who could understand; the ears of all the people were given to the scroll of the Teaching.
- (4) Ezra the scribe stood upon a wooden tower made for the purpose, and beside him stood Mattithiah, Shema, Anaiyah, Uriah, Hilkiyah, and Maaseiyah at his right, and at his left Pedaiah, Mishael, Malchijah, Hashum, Hashbaddanah, Zechariah, Meshullam.
- (5) Ezra opened the scroll in the sight of all the people, for he was above all the people; as he opened it, all the people stood up.
- (6) Ezra blessed Adonai, the great God, and all the people answered, “Amen, Amen,” with hands upraised. Then they bowed their heads and prostrated themselves before Adonai with their faces to the ground.

Nehemiah 8:8-13

- (8) They read from the scroll of the Teaching of God, translating it and giving the sense; so they understood the reading.
- (9) Nehemiah the Tirshatha, Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who were explaining to the people said to all the people, “This day is holy to Adonai your God: you must not mourn or weep,” for all the people were weeping as they listened to the words of the Teaching.
- (10) He further said to them, “Go, eat choice foods and drink sweet drinks and send portions to whoever has nothing prepared, for the day is holy to our Lord. Do not be sad, for your rejoicing in Adonai is the source of your strength.”
- (11) The Levites were quieting the people, saying, “Hush, for the day is holy; do not be sad.”
- (12) Then all the people went to eat and drink and send portions and make great merriment, for they understood the things they were told.
- (13) On the second day, the heads of the clans of all the people and the priests and Levites gathered to Ezra the scribe to study the words of the Teaching.

Nehemiah 9:1-3

- (1) On the twenty-fourth day of this month, the Israelites assembled, fasting, in sackcloth, and with earth upon them.
- (2) Those of the stock of Israel separated themselves from all foreigners, and stood and confessed their sins and the iniquities of their fathers.
- (3) Standing in their places, they read from the scroll of the Teaching of Adonai their God for one-fourth of the day, and for another fourth they confessed and prostrated themselves before Adonai their God.

Nehemiah 10:29-34

- (29) “And the rest of the people, the priests, the Levites, the gatekeepers, the singers, the temple servants, and all who separated themselves from the peoples of the lands to [follow] the Teaching of God, their wives, sons and daughters, all who know enough to understand,
- (30) join with their noble brothers, and take an oath with sanctions to follow the Teaching of God, given through Moses the servant of God, and to observe carefully all the commandments of Adonai our God, His rules and laws.
- (31) “Namely: We will not give our daughters in marriage to the peoples of the land, or take their daughters for our sons.
- (32) “The peoples of the land who bring their wares and all sorts of foodstuff for sale on the sabbath day—we will not buy from them on the sabbath or a holy day. “We will forgo [the produce of] the seventh year, and every outstanding debt.
- (33) “We have laid upon ourselves obligations: To charge ourselves one-third of a shekel yearly for the service of the House of our God—

Sukkot and Simchat Torah Lesson 2: Ethiopian Sigd

Appendix B

(34) for the rows of bread, for the regular meal offering and for the regular burnt offering, [for those of the] sabbaths, new moons, festivals, for consecrations, for sin offerings to atone for Israel, and for all the work in the House of our God.

Psalms 122:1-2

(1) A song of ascents. Of David. I rejoiced when they said to me, "We are going to the House of the LORD." (2) Our feet stood inside your gates, O Jerusalem,

Traditional Psalm 122 Addition I

Come and we will bow and thank the Only Holy One.

Come and we will bow, pray, sing, bless, sanctify our Father, creator of Heaven and Earth.

Come and we will bow, pray, sing, bless, sanctify, take heart, cling to our Father, creator of Heaven and Earth.

And we will bow in the midst of His Temple, the spot of the footstool of Adonai.

And we will bow in the midst of His Holy Temple.

First of all, worship to His seat - the Highest are You.

I will bow to You in Your house in Holy Jerusalem.

Thus we will bow in our hearts.

All creatures of the earth will bow and thank You.

Amen, amen.

The wondrous angels will bow to the commandments that were from Your voice.

Holy, holy, they will bow from afar.

The wondrous angels will bow to the commandments of Your voice.

All the earth will bow and give thanks to You, Your name.

They will bring flocks of sheep and cattle and bow in Jerusalem.

And they will bring gold and silver and bow in Jerusalem.

And they will bring golden garments and bow in Jerusalem.

And they will bring beautiful clothes and bow in Jerusalem.

And they will come - priests and prophets - and bow in Jerusalem.

And they will come - kings and princes - and bow in Jerusalem.

And they will come - greats and judges - and bow in Jerusalem.

And they will come from east and west and bow in Jerusalem.

And they will come from north and south and bow in Jerusalem.

And they will come from all four directions and bow in Jerusalem.

Worship Adonai in the courtyard of His holy house.

The voice of Adonai, Your voice is pure.

The voice of Adonai is as pure silver right from the earth.

The voice of Adonai is steadfast and strong.

The voice of Adonai hews fiery flames.

The voice of Adonai shakes the desert.

The voice of Adonai holds up the mighty.

The voice of Adonai holds up the heavens.

Adonai will establish His throne.

Adonai will establish His throne for His reign in the firmaments of the cherubim.

Your throne is above the firmaments, Your throne, Adonai.

In the firmaments of the cherubim, Your throne.

You are the only God to all.

May it be that Adonai will reign forever and forever constantly renewed.

Adonai will bless His people with peace.

Sukkot and Simchat Torah Lesson 2: Ethiopian Sigd *Appendix B*

Traditional Psalm 122 Addition II

None is like You, God;
None is like You, God.
In the heavens above;
None is like You, God.
And upon the earth below;
Who is like You, God?

Psalms 122:3

(3) Jerusalem is built up, a city knit together.

Traditional Psalm 122 Addition III

For the royal house declare: For Jerusalem seek good!
Our flesh, our flesh, [longs] for Jerusalem!
Our flesh, our flesh, [longs] for the Holy Temple!
For the sake of David's house, seek the good of Jerusalem!
For the sake of the house of Adonai, seek, God, seek the good of Jerusalem!
Adonai, ask for the good of Jerusalem, seek the good of Jerusalem!
I have longed, yea, I have longed.
I have longed, yea, I have longed for Jerusalem.
Those who worship Me in the midst of My house will inherit My estate.
Those who desire to come to the midst of My house will inherit My estate.
O House of Jacob, sanctify My name!
O House of Israel, sanctify My name!
Princes of the house of Jacob!
Princes of the house of Israel!
Thus the house of Jacob will speak -
Listen to me, o house of Jacob!
And you all will come, newborns, children,
All the seed of Your people will be gathered.
For I live - says Adonai!

Psalms 122:4-9

- (4) ...to which tribes would make pilgrimage, the tribes of Adonai, —as was enjoined upon Israel— to praise the name of Adonai.
(5) There the thrones of judgment stood, thrones of the house of David.
(6) Pray for the well-being of Jerusalem; “May those who love you be at peace.
(7) May there be well-being within your ramparts, peace in your citadels.”
(8) For the sake of my kin and friends, I pray for your well-being;
(9) for the sake of the house of Adonai our God, I seek your good.

Kehillot haOlam: Sukkot and Simchat Torah

Lesson 3: Morocco

Goals

- To explore Moroccan traditions around Sukkot and Simchat Torah.

Essential Questions

- How is the prophet Elijah related to Sukkot?
- How is the lulav used as a symbol to promote good health?
- Why do Moroccan children carry candles during the Hakafot during Simchat Torah?

Objectives (*Students will be able to...*)

- Compare and contrast their understanding of Sukkot and Simchat Torah with that of the Moroccan community.

Supplies:

- Computer with internet and audio
- Myrtle leaves, 2 twig per student
 - <https://etsy.me/39y33YE>
- Willow leaves, 2 twig per student
 - <https://etsy.me/2IdTxhs>
- Palm frond, 2 twigs per student
 - <https://etsy.me/39meLFX>
- Twine
- Ribbon of different colors, 3 feet per student
- Bells, 3 per student
- Flowerpot, 1 per student
- Dirt
- Paint pens
- Acrylic paints
- Paint brushes

Other Things to Prepare

- Pre-load one of the following links onto a computer with internet and audio
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1ldxquYoqVo>
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2T5gAXoerjw>
- (optional) Copies of *Appendix A: Elijah the Prophet*, 1 per student.
- Precut ribbon into foot long strips, enough for each student to have 3
- Copies of *Appendix B: Moroccan Lulav*, 1 per student

Kehillot haOlam: Sukkot and Simchat Torah

Lesson 3: Morocco

Set Induction

(10 minutes)

One of the common traditions associated with Sukkot is to invite guests into the Sukkah. These guests are called “*Ushpizin*.” The inspiration for this goes back to our first patriarch, Abraham. He would sit outside waiting for the opportunity to invite strangers into the shade of his tent, and then run to prepare a meal of the finest ingredients.

For more information about *Ushpizin*, check out this link:

<https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/ushpizin-welcoming-guests/>

Ask student to share the name of someone whom they would like to invite into their Sukkah as an *Ushpiz* (the singular form of *Ushpizin*). They should explain why they would invite that guest and if they are famous, one question they would ask that person while in their sukkah.

Activity 1: Elijah in the Sukkah

(20 minutes)

Many Ashkenazi families invite the following *Ushpizin* into their *Sukkot*: Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Aaron, and David. Moroccan communities, however, invite the prophet Elijah. They take a chair, hang it up as decoration, and place holy books on it. While this is called Elijah’s Chair it is not just for Elijah - it is for any *Ushpizin* invited in. The chair serves as the material symbol of the custom to invite guests.

- 🕒 When else do we leave something for Elijah?
 - Passover – We leave a cup for Elijah and open the door to invite him into our Seder
- 🕒 What else do you know about the prophet Elijah?

It is likely that this is the only association students have with Elijah the prophet. Take a few moments to explore more about who he was using one of the following resources:

Video: Who was Elijah the Prophet?

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1ldxquYoqVo>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2T5gAXoerjw>

Appendix A: Elijah the Prophet

Then, bring the group back together to answer the following questions:

- 🕒 What made Elijah special? What can we learn from his actions?
- 🕒 Why is Elijah worthy of being invited into the *Sukkah* as an *Ushpiz*?
- 🕒 Why do you think Moroccan Jews use Elijah’s chair as decoration in the Sukkah? What do the holy books placed on top add to the decorations?

Kehillot haOlam: Sukkot and Simchat Torah

Lesson 3: Morocco

Activity 2: Lulav Review

(10 minutes)

Begin by reviewing the significance of the *lulav* during Sukkot. Details include but are not limited to:

- The *lulav* is made up of 3 species: willow, myrtle, and palm frond
- Some believe the species of the *lulav* represent parts of the human body
 - The willow represents the mouth.
 - The myrtle represents the eyes.
 - The palm frond represents the spine.
- We shake the *lulav* with the etrog (a lemon-like fruit) in six directions while in the sukkah.
- The Torah mentions the commandments to obtain a *lulav* for *Sukkot* in *Leviticus 23:40*:
 - *On the first day you shall take the product of hadar trees (etrog), branches of palm trees, boughs of leafy trees (myrtle), and willows of the brook, and you shall rejoice before Adonai your God seven days.*

Activity 3: Moroccan Lulav

(30 minutes)

In the Moroccan community the *lulav* may be decorated with silk ribbons and a bell. After the holiday, it is sometimes placed in a flowerpot to promote good health. Some leave it on top of the Ark (the cabinet that houses the Torah scrolls in a synagogue) until Passover to be used as a "broom" in the search for leavened bread.

Pass out *Appendix B: Moroccan Lulav* to each student. Follow the steps using the supplies provided.

Closure

(5 minutes)

Once all of the students have finished their *lulavs*, have each of them share their answer to the following question:

“ I am like the *lulav* because_____.”

Encourage students to think creatively and incorporate the Moroccan tradition into their answer if possible.

Elijah the Prophet ²⁴

Elijah the Tishbite, from the region of Gilead, was one of the two men in the Hebrew Scriptures who did not die but was taken by God; the other was Enoch (Genesis 5:24).

Under King Ahab

Elijah prophesied during the reign of King Ahab of Israel. He performed his first miracles in the town of Zarephath, near Sidon, in the house of a poor widow, where he converted a handful of meal and a little oil into an endless supply and brought back to life the dead child of the widow.

Jezebel, the wife of King Ahab, was a Phoenician princess, daughter of Ethbaal, king of Sidon. She exerted a strong influence over the king, who granted her unlimited administrative authority. She introduced in Israel the Phoenician pagan cult of the god Baal, a development that was bitterly opposed by the prophet Elijah. Not only did Ahab tolerate the foreign cult introduced by his wife but he also cooperated with her by building a temple for Baal in Samaria and erecting a sacred post.

Elijah told the king that God would withhold rain to punish him and left the country. There was a severe food shortage in Samaria, which lasted three years. In the third year of the famine, King Ahab talked with Obadiah, the governor of the royal palace, and said that they should both travel through the land—the king in one direction, and the palace governor in another—searching for places where there was enough grass to feed the horses and the mules.

Obadiah was a God-fearing man, who had risked his life by protecting 100 prophets of the Lord from Jezebel's murderous persecution and hiding them in a cave. He met Elijah on the road and was told by the prophet to tell the king that he was back in Israel. Obadiah, although afraid that Ahab would kill him for bringing news of Elijah, informed the king that the prophet had returned to the kingdom. Ahab went to meet Elijah. When he saw him, he accused the prophet of being a troublemaker.

Elijah retorted that Ahab and his father, Omri, were the real troublemakers, because they had forsaken the true God and worshiped the idols of Baal. Elijah requested an encounter with the prophets of Baal, who were under Queen Jezebel's protection and who ate at her table. King Ahab consented. Elijah confronted 450 priests of Baal at Mount Carmel and challenged them to prove who was the true God, the Lord or Baal, by having fire from heaven come down and consume the sacrifice.

The priests of Baal prayed for hours without any results, while Elijah mocked them. Then it was Elijah's turn to pray to God. Fire came down on the altar and consumed the sacrifice. Elijah told the people to seize and kill the priests of Baal.

The drought, which had lasted three years, broke in a great storm. Ahab drove back to his capital in his chariot through the heavy rain, with the prophet Elijah running in front of the king all the way to Jezreel. Ahab told Jezebel that Elijah had killed her prophets. The queen was furious and sent a messenger to Elijah, threatening to kill him.

²⁴ <https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/elijah/>

The Story of Naboth

The prophet escaped to the desert in the south. There, he found Elisha son of Shaphat, who was plowing with oxen when Elijah placed his cloak upon him, thus symbolizing that he had chosen Elisha as a disciple. Elisha slaughtered two oxen, used the plow for firewood, gave the meat to his people, and left to follow Elijah.

Ahab coveted the vineyard of his neighbor Naboth the Jezreelite. The king's intention was to use that plot of land, which was adjacent to the palace, for a vegetable garden. He offered to pay Naboth for the land or to exchange it for an equivalent plot. Naboth refused to give up his family inheritance, and the king went back to the palace depressed and angry.

His wife, Jezebel, asked him why was he so depressed and why he refused to eat. The king replied that Naboth wouldn't sell him his land. Jezebel told him to be cheerful and to leave the matters in her hands. Jezebel arranged to have Naboth accused falsely of insulting God. Naboth was tried for blasphemy and was executed. Ahab then took possession of the property.

The Prophet Elijah went to Naboth's vineyard, confronted the king, and accused him of murdering the man and taking over his property. The prophet told the king that God would punish him for his evil deeds; that dogs would lick his blood in the very place that dogs had licked up Naboth's blood; that his family would come to the same bad end as King Jeroboam and King Baasha; and that dogs would eat the body of his wife, Jezebel.

After Elijah finished speaking, Ahab tore his clothes, took them off, and put on sackcloth. He fasted, slept in the sackcloth, and walked about gloomy and depressed. The king's humble behavior made God relent and postpone the prophesied disaster until the reign of Ahab's son, after Ahab's death. Ahab died fighting against the Arameans, and his son Ahaziah succeeded to the throne.

Elijah is Protected by God

Shortly afterward, the new king severely injured himself when he fell from the window of an upper story of his palace. Ahaziah sent messengers to the Philistine city of Ekron to ask Baalzebub, the god of that city, whether he would recover. Elijah reproved him for this act and prophesied that he would die. The king heard what Elijah had prophesied and sent a company of 50 soldiers to seize the prophet, but the troops were killed by fire from heaven.

The same thing happened to a second company of soldiers. A third company of soldiers was sent, which, this time, succeeded in bringing Elijah to the palace. Elijah, once in the presence of the king, repeated his prophecy. The king died soon afterward. Elijah knew that his own end was near.

With his disciple Elisha, who refused to leave him, he went to the river Jordan, divided the waters by hitting them with his mantle, and crossed over on dry ground. Elijah asked Elisha, "Tell me, what can I do for you before I am taken from you?"

Elisha answered, "Let a double portion of your spirit pass on to me (2 Kings 2:9)." While they were talking, a chariot pulled by horses of fire appeared and took Elijah by a whirlwind into heaven.

Moroccan Lulav

Supplies

- Myrtle leaves
- Willow leaves
- Palm frond
- Twine
- Ribbon of different colors
- Bells
- Flowerpots
- Dirt
- Paint pens
- Acrylic paints
- Paint brushes

Instructions

1. Take 2 twigs of the myrtle, 2 twigs of the willow and 2 twigs of the palm frond.
2. Using the twine, tie the pieces together so that they are secure. This may require using multiple knots and/or weaving the twine through the twigs and then tying a knot.
3. Grab 3 pieces of ribbon and 3 bells. Tie the bells at the bottom or middle of each of the ribbons.
4. Tie the ribbons to the Lulav so that they hang down. When you shake the lulav, the bells should ring.
5. Take a flowerpot and decorate it using the paint and pain pens.

Note: because this will serve as a symbol of good health, use that as inspiration for your design.

6. Place the lulav into the pot.
7. Carefully surround the lulav with dirt so that it fills three quarters of the way to the top. Make sure the ribbons with the bells are on the outside of the dirt.
8. Take your lulav pot home and save it for Passover!

Kehillot haOlam: Sukkot & Simchat Torah

Lesson 4: Authentic Assessment

Goals

- To synthesize and apply the learning from lessons 1-3.
- To create a Sukkot or Simchat Torah practice that feels authentic to them
- To honor the Sukkot and Simchat Torah practices that they have explored throughout this unit.

Essential Questions

- What have I learned from this unit?
- How can I take what I've learned into my life today?
- How can the learning from the unit impact my current Sukkot or Simchat Torah practice?

Objectives (*Students will be able to...*)

- Synthesize the learning and articulate their takeaways that occurred between lessons 1-3.
- Summarize how they plan to honor the Sukkot and Simchat Torah traditions learned throughout this unit.

Notes to the Educator

This lesson looks the same for every unit. While the content and number of lessons in each unit differ, this final lesson will include an authentic assessment of the student's choosing. This lesson lists some options for the students, however there are an endless number of options. As best you can (within reason) encourage students to think creatively regarding how they want to show their learning on this day. For many of these options, it is advised that they choose their authentic assessment assignment *before* the unit begins, as they may need to do things throughout the lessons to contribute to this assessment. Instruct them to do a different Authentic Assessment for each unit.

As the educator, you can also decide that every student does the same assignment but adjusts it to appeal to their needs and understanding of the material. If that is the case, it is advised that you choose 1 option per unit so that they do not duplicate assignments between units.

Refer to the Hanukkah Authentic Assessment on p. 199 for script.

Kehillot haOlam: Sukkot & Simchat Torah

Lesson 4: Authentic Assessment

Set Induction

(2 minutes)

Explain to the students that they will do an “authentic assessment” of the learning gained throughout this unit. An authentic assessment is a way for an educator to gauge what material was learned throughout a given time. Remind students that unlike in school where they are given tests, and papers, this authentic assessment, allows them to create something meaningful to them.

Let the students know that you will provide a list of authentic assessment ideas that they could do for this Sukkot and Simchat Torah Unit. They will see some of the same options each time as well as some variation for each unit; however, they must do different assessments for each one. The asterisk (*) indicates the assessments that are unique to the unit. If none of these ideas speak to the students, encourage them to bring in other ideas. There are only 2 criteria: it must show what they have learned in some way and it should be something that they are excited to create and share with the class.

Activity 1

(10-15 minutes)

Begin by reviewing what they have learned during this Sukkot and Simchat Torah Unit. Encourage students to list as many things as they can remember first, then you can jump in to remind them of details.

Lesson 1: India

Lesson 2: Ethiopian Sigd

Lesson 3: Morocco

Activity 2

Now it is their turn to create something meaningful. Here is a list of options for them to choose from:

Photo Gallery *

- Create a photo gallery of images depicting Sukkot around the world. Make sure to create captions below each one saying something about each photo (i.e. where it is from and something unique about it).
- Compare and contrast these images in some way that is meaningful to you. This can be in the form of a PowerPoint presentation, essay, etc.

Kehillot haOlam: Sukkot & Simchat Torah

Lesson 4: Authentic Assessment

Teach a Dance *

- Learn more Bollywood dances and teach them to the class in preparation for Simchat Torah.
- Create your own dance (using Bollywood dance moves, or not) to any Simchat Torah song.

Cooking *

- Cook a dish involving fall foods that are in season during Sukkot. Creatively explain each food's origin and share some of the community's history in which it derives.

Explore other Sukkot and Simchat Torah Traditions *

- Bukharan Jews decorate their Sukkah with colorful silks, woven fabrics and embroidered rugs. Create your own replica of this type of Sukkah either in 3D or on your computer (i.e. The Sims – style)
- French Jews hang a red onion in their sukkah to ward off evil spirits. What other superstitions surround the holiday Sukkot? Present your learning in a way that is authentic to you. How else do French Jews celebrate Sukkot?
- For more ideas, check out [this](#) link. ²⁵

Vision Board

- Using magazines, paper, scissors and glue, create a collage board that includes ideas learned throughout this lesson. This should somehow illustrate how you plan to bring these global Sukkot and Simchat Torah practices to life.

Blog Post

- Write a blog post that illustrates your three main takeaways from this unit. What did you learn and how has it impacted your Jewish identity? What questions do you still have? What are you most looking forward to exploring further?

Vlog

- Similar to the blog, record yourself discussing your three main takeaways from this unit. You could even bring in video clippings from previous lessons to better illustrate your learning.

²⁵ <https://jewishjournal.com/culture/travel/97027/>

Kehillot haOlam: Sukkot & Simchat Torah

Lesson 4: Authentic Assessment

Instagram Story

- Using your Instagram or a new Instagram account, document the variety of activities that we did throughout this unit. This can be done as the lessons are taught and/or something larger at the end to summarize.

Song Playlist

- Create a playlist of Sukkot and Simchat Torah music. This can be comprised of already existing Jewish music for Sukkot and Simchat Torah or secular songs that focus on Sukkot and Simchat Torah themes. Publish the playlist somewhere (perhaps the synagogues website and/or social media page) so that others can enjoy these songs.

Organize a Service

- Inspired by ideas learned about Sukkot and Simchat Torah around the world, create a Shabbat service for the synagogue that highlights unfamiliar details of global Sukkot and Simchat Torah practices. This could include various songs, texts and food for Oneg.

Interview

- Find someone who is of a different Jewish origin than you. Interview them about their family's history and any unique customs, traditions or rituals associated with Sukkot or Simchat Torah within their family.

Closure

Create a way for the students to all present their authentic assessments to one another. You can invite the students' families, clergy team, board members of the congregation, or keep it intimate with just the class. It could also be simply asking students to give an elevator pitch of the learning from the Authentic Assessment they created outside of class.

UNIT 4: HANUKKAH

Kehillot haOlam: Hanukkah

Lesson 1: Comparative Potato Pancakes

Goals

- To cook three types of Potato Pancakes: Indian Kanda Bhaji, Mexican plátanos fritos, and Korean “Paj-kes.”
- To discuss the connections between these foods and traditional Latkes.

Essential Questions

- What are some ways that Jews around the world have adopted the Ashkenazi Latke to fit within their culture?

Objectives (Students will be able to...)

- Explain how these foods came to be recognized as part of the Indian-Jewish, Mexican-Jewish, and Korean-Jewish cultures.
- Suggest a possible connection between food, tradition, and customs.
- Define “cultural fusion” as it relates to “Paj-kes.”
- Articulate their understanding of “Jewish &” for themselves and more broadly.

Supplies:

- 5 Large Post It’s
- Markers
- Computer
- Good speakers
- 3 Frying Pans
- Food Processor
- Ingredients for Indian Kanda Bhaji (*makes about 10 balls*):
 - Approximately two medium onions
 - 1 bunch fresh cilantro
 - 1¼ cup chickpea flour
 - ½ cup water
 - ¼ teaspoon turmeric
 - 1 teaspoon cumin
 - ½ teaspoon salt
 - Pinch of chili powder
 - Vegetable oil for frying
- Ingredients for Mexican Plátanos Fritos (*makes 12 medium sized latkes*)
 - 2 green plantains
 - 1 yellow, sweet plantain
 - 2 gold potatoes
 - ½ of a large white, yellow or brown onion
 - 2 garlic cloves, grated
 - 2 whole eggs, whisked
 - ½ cup matzo meal or breadcrumbs

Kehillot haOlam: Hanukkah

Lesson 1: Comparative Potato Pancakes

- Canola or grapeseed oil, for frying
- 1 avocado
- 1 mango
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1 teaspoon ground coriander
- 1 teaspoon mild paprika
- 1 teaspoon ground oregano
- 2 teaspoons chili powder or chipotle powder
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Ingredients for Korean “Paj-kes” (*makes 20-30 medallions*)
 - 5 lb. shredded Idaho potatoes
 - 2 large, shredded sweet yellow onions
 - 6-7 shredded orange carrots
 - 3 bunches of scallions, quartered length-wise and sliced diagonally in lengths of 1 to 1.5”
 - 5 eggs
 - 1.5 cups Korean pajeon potato pancake flour, for example, Beksul Korean Pancake Mix, available in Asian grocery stores and online
 - 3 tbsp garlic powder
 - Salt and pepper to taste
 - 1 cup soy sauce
 - 3 tbsp of rice vinegar
 - Garlic, minced – to your liking
 - Scallions, chopped – to your liking
 - Sesame seeds – to your liking

Other Things to Prepare:

- Write one of the following words at the top of each of the 5 Large Post It’s: “See” “Smell,” “Taste,” “Touch,” and “Hear” and post them around the room.
- Copies of Appendix A: Recipes and Memories from Hanukkah in India, 1 per student
- Copies of Appendix B: Mexican Plátanos Fritos, 1 per student
- Copies of Appendix C: Korean “Paj-kes”, 1 per student
- Load Wholly Jewish Podcast: Kimchi and Latkes on a computer with good speakers. <http://whollyjewish.libsyn.com/kimchi-and-latkes>

Kehillot haOlam: Hanukkah

Lesson 1: Comparative Potato Pancakes

Set Induction

(15 minutes)

“ Welcome everyone! Today we are going to begin our discussion on Hannukah and how it is celebrated in different Jewish cultures around the world. Before we dive into other cultures, let’s get a sense of how we as a class celebrate Hanukkah. Around the room you will see 5 posters that say ‘See,’ ‘Smell,’ ‘Taste,’ ‘Touch,’ and ‘Hear.’ I want you to walk around the room, and list as many things as you can as they relate to Hanukkah. For example, what are all the things that you see on Hanukkah. Be as specific as possible. If someone has already written your answer down, just put a check mark next to it. Once you are done, we will come back together and discuss.

Give each student a marker. Allow time for students to walk around to each of the posters and to list what they see, smell, taste, touch and hear on Hanukkah. Encourage students to visit each poster twice incase other students’ answers inspire them to add more.

- 🕒 What was this activity like for you? Easy? Hard? Why?
- 🕒 Which category was easiest to fill out? Which was the hardest?
- 🕒 What do you notice about the diversity of answers? Were there Hanukkah practices that you were unfamiliar with? Which ones?

If students are comfortable sharing their families unique Hanukkah celebrations, without feeling singled out, feel free to allow them to share.

- “ As we have with other holidays, we are going to spend today looking at ways that Hanukkah is celebrated around the world through some of these senses. While these holidays practices may be familiar to some of you, others may be unfamiliar. Many of them are adaptations of other practices and are characteristic of their host culture in various ways.
- “ Our first lesson will focus on Potato Pancakes, which many of you listed as a food that you smell and taste on Hanukkah. We will look at three different types of Potato Pancakes: Indian Kanda Bhaji, Mexican plátanos fritos, and Korean “Paj-kes.”

This next set of activities can be done individually, with the class broken up into groups, or some combination of both. If you choose to teach them individually, you will

Kehillot haOlam: Hanukkah

Lesson 1: Comparative Potato Pancakes

read/discuss the article as a class, cook the item connected to it, and then go on to the next article and food. Use the cooking time to ask the discussion questions. If you choose to break the class into groups, they will each read the article, cook the food associated with it, discuss the questions as a group, and then present the article and food to the rest of the class. If you choose to do a combination, I suggest doing the Korean “Paj-kes” together as a class.

Activity 1: Indian Kanda Bhaji

(45 minutes)

“ Our first Potato Pancake is called “Kanda Bhaji.”

Have students repeat “Kanda Bhaji” after you

“ Kanda Bhaji is from a food from the Bene Israel community in India. This particular food has drawn much influence on Maharashtra and Konkan culinary styles. Maharashtra, or Marathi cuisine, is from the Indian state of Maharashtra which is in the southwest region of India. Marathi cuisine includes mild and spicy dishes made from wheat, rice, vegetables, lentils, fruit, peanuts and cashews. Konkan is an area on the coast of Maharashtra and is characterized by coconut in various forms, dried red chilis and spices such as coriander seeds, peppercorns, cumin, cardamom, ginger and garlic.

“ Now we are going to read about a woman named Eddna Samuel who is from Mumbai and how her family has used Kanda Bhaji to celebrate Hanukkah.

Pass out Appendix A: Recipes and Memories from Hanukkah in India, to each student, or to the group of students focusing on this dish. Read the article and ask the following questions.

- ❓ What aspects of Indian Jewish history did you learn from this article?
 - Local Rabbi Gavriel Noach Holtzberg z”l, lost his life during the Mumbai attacks in 2008
 - Bene Israel Jews, settled in Konkan after being shipwrecked off the coast.
 - India is the only country where anti-Semitism never became a broad issue, where Jews have always prospered and lived as an integral part of society.
- ❓ What parts of Eddna’s article did you relate to? What seemed unfamiliar?
- ❓ What are Eddna’s “Jewish &’s?” How do those “Jewish &’s” play a role in her life?
- ❓ Why do you think Indian Jews traditionally light an oil lamp instead of a candle?

Kehillot haOlam: Hanukkah

Lesson 1: Comparative Potato Pancakes

- Wax candles were harder to come by in India, oil is much easier to access

Now take the time to cook Kanda Bhaji as a class.

Activity 2: Mexican Plátanos Fritos

(45 minutes)

“ Our next Potato Pancake is called “Plátanos Fritos.”

Have students repeat “Plátanos Fritos” after you.

“ Plátanos Fritos are made with fried plantains, which is closely related to a banana. As you will soon see, there are actually two kinds of plantains: green and yellow. While we might think that the green plantains are just unripe, they are a completely different type of plantain. Yellow plantains are sweet and can be eaten raw, while green plantains are tougher and made for cooking.

“ Now we are going to read about a woman named Julia Hernandez Nierenberg, a Mexican-American Jew, and how her family has used Plátanos Fritos to celebrate Hanukkah.

Pass out Appendix B: A Latin Twist on Hanukkah Latkes, to each student, or to the group of students focusing on this dish. Read the article and ask the following questions.

- 🕒 What parts of Julia’s article did you relate to? What seemed unfamiliar?
- 🕒 Does your family have any breakfast traditions?
- 🕒 What are Julia’s “Jewish &’s?” How do those “Jewish &’s” play a role in her life?
- 🕒 Just looking at the ingredients, what else seems familiar to traditional latkes? What looks different?

Now take the time to cook Plátanos Fritos as a class.

Activity 3: Korean “Paj-kes”

(45 minutes)

“ Our next Potato Pancake is called “Paj-kes,” which is a combination of a Korean pancake called Pajeon and Latkes.

Have students repeat “Paj-kes” and “Pajeon” after you.

Kehillot haOlam: Hanukkah

Lesson 1: Comparative Potato Pancakes

- “ Pajeon a popular Korean pancake made with eggs, wheat flour, rice flour, and scallions. It is often sliced like a pizza and served in slices.
- “ Now we are going to read about a woman named Becky Jaye, a Korean-American Jew, and how her family has used Paj-kes to celebrate Hanukkah.

Pass out Appendix C: Korean Paj-kes to each student, or to the group of students focusing on this dish. Read the article and listen to more of Becky’s story on the Wholly Jewish podcast: <http://whollyjewish.libsyn.com/kimchi-and-latkes>. You can also mention some of these questions below to the students ahead of time so that they can think about them as they listen to the podcast episode.

- 🕒 What are Becky’s “Jewish &’s?” How do those “Jewish &’s” play a role in her life?
- 🕒 What parts of Becky’s story did you relate to? What seemed unfamiliar?
- 🕒 What are some examples in your life of things that have been brought together by a common love for something?
- 🕒 How does Becky fuse Korean food with Jewish foods?
- 🕒 What is Becky’s “charge(s)” to the Jewish community?
- 🕒 How do you think Becky defines “community”?

Closure

(10 minutes)

Bring the class back together the discuss the following questions. This can also happen while they are eating.

- 🕒 What do these dishes have in common? How are these dishes different?
- 🕒 What do these dishes teach us about the Jewish communities from which they came?
- 🕒 What are the values behind these Eddna, Julia, and Becky’s traditions?
- 🕒 Why do you think it so important for Eddna, Julia, and Becky to keep or adapt these traditions in the way that they did?

Recipes and Memories from Hanukkah in India

By Eddna Samuel²⁶

I grew up in the Bene Israel Jewish community in Mumbai and still live there. During Hanukkah, we have a busy schedule, going to each other's houses to light the Hanukkah candles. We gather to celebrate with family and friends and in our synagogues. I always celebrate my first night with the candle lighting in Keneseth Eliyahu Synagogue at Kala Ghoda and the eighth and last day—the finale—is at the Shaare Rason Synagogue Khadak.



During Hanukkah, Indian Jews traditionally light an oil lamp instead of a candle.

The late Rabbi Gavriel Noach Holtzberg z"l, who lost his life during the 26/11 Mumbai attacks in 2008, started the tradition of lighting the spiritual and festive lights of Hanukkah in 2003 at the Gateway of India, close to the Taj Mahal Hotel. Over the past decade, Chabad Mumbai has continued the tradition of lighting the menorah at Gateway of India with a wish to spread light and love.

I'm always seeing miracles happening in my life on a daily basis. When Hanukkah time comes around my world truly starts lighting up with a special spiritual feeling of me actually living in a miracle.

Our ancestors, Bene Israel Jews, settled in Konkan after being shipwrecked off the coast. The Jews were welcomed warmly and have lived here for generations. India is the only country where anti-Semitism never became a broad issue, where Jews have always prospered and lived as an integral part of society. Both my parents served in the government. I grew up with Hindus and Muslims. I have fond memories from my childhood. We all had

²⁶ <https://www.myjewishlearning.com/jewish-and/recipes-and-memories-from-hanukkah-in-india/>

a good time studying and playing together without any regard for caste or creed.

And so it is no surprise that Bene Israel cuisine has drawn much influence on Maharashtra and Konkan culinary styles. For Hanukkah, it is customary to have something fried like onion fritters, so-called kanda bhaji or batata bhaji, but my mother would always make something more healthy like sweet *halwa* or sweet rice and then fry potatoes with black pepper in a little oil in order to remember the miracle of Hanukkah.

Recipe for Kanda Bhaji

(Makes about 10 balls)

Ingredients

- Approximately two medium onions
- 1 bunch fresh cilantro
- 1¼ cup chickpea flour
- ½ cup water
- ¼ teaspoon turmeric
- 1 teaspoon cumin
- ½ teaspoon salt
- Pinch of chili powder
- Vegetable oil for frying

Directions:

1. Slice onions into smallish pieces.
2. Chop cilantro add rest of ingredients for batter and mix together. Heat oil in deep pot.
3. Shape batter into rounds like falafel balls. The batter will be a little loose.
4. Drop balls of batter into the oil.
5. Turn over to make sure golden brown and crisp on both sides.
6. Remove with slotted spoon and drain on paper towels.
7. Serve warm as appetizer or snack.

A Latin Twist on Hanukkah Latkes

By Julia Hernandez Nierenberg ²⁷

This holiday season, I invite you to try a latke recipe with a bit more spice! In preparation for Hanukkah, I created a recipe that mixed my Latina and Jewish roots and my taste-testers and I couldn't be happier with the result!

Pancakes have always been big in my family. When I was a kid, every Sunday my dad would make the most delicious pancakes for all of us to eat. Sunday breakfast was a sacred time in our busy weekend lives to take a deep breath and check in with each other. Later on, he taught my brother and me how to make the perfect fluffy pancakes.

Hanukkah pancakes, by contrast, are anything but fluffy. When frying latkes, the crispier, the better! In making these latkes, I married the tastes of fried plantains, *plátanos fritos*, that connect me with my mom and her Mexican roots together with the pancake expertise I learned from my dad for new Mexican-American-Jewish take on this Hanukkah classic.

Plátanos Fritos

(makes 12 medium-sized latkes)

Ingredients:

- 2 green plantains
- 1 yellow, sweet plantain
- 2 gold potatoes
- ½ of a large white, yellow or brown onion
- 2 garlic cloves, grated
- 2 whole eggs, whisked
- ½ cup matzo meal or breadcrumbs
- Canola or grapeseed oil, for frying
- 1 avocado
- 1 mango
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1 teaspoon ground coriander
- 1 teaspoon mild paprika
- 1 teaspoon ground oregano
- 2 teaspoons chilli powder or chipotle powder
- ½ teaspoon garlic powder
- Salt and pepper to taste



²⁷ <https://www.myjewishlearning.com/jewish-and/a-latin-twist-on-hanukkah-latkes/>

Hanukkah Lesson 1: Comparative Potato Pancakes

Appendix B

You will also need:

- Food processor (with shredding blades)
- Large mixing bowl
- Skillet pan
- Paring knife

Directions:

1. Begin by preparing your ingredients. Use a paring knife to peel off the tough, outer skin on the green and yellow plantains. Using a peeler, peel off the skin on the potatoes.
2. Slice each plantain in half and each potato into pieces (the potato pieces should be large enough to fit through the feed of a food processor).
3. Dice the onion and garlic and place into large mixing bowl.
4. Using the food processor's small shredding blade, shred the plantains and potatoes (option to use a hand grater if a food processor is not available).
5. Add the shredded plantains and potatoes into the bowl of diced onions and garlic. Then add the eggs, matzo meal, and spices (use as much spice or as little as you wish). Mix it all together!
6. Next, heat your large skillet or frying pan with enough grapeseed or canola oil to coat the bottom of the pan (no more than $\frac{1}{4}$ inch). You can test the heat of the oil by placing a small piece of your latke mixture into the pan. If you hear a sizzle, it's ready!
7. Then, spoon a two tablespoon-sized amount of the latke mixture into the pan. With the back of the spoon, gently press down on the latke for even fry. You should be able to add 3-4 latkes to a large skillet.
8. Fry on the first side until your desired brown, crispiness, usually 2-3 minutes for me. With a spatula, carefully flip the latke over and continue cooking for another 2-3 minutes.
9. Once finished, lay your latkes on a metal drying rack to cool.
10. While sour cream and applesauce are delicious, cooling toppings for these spicy latkes, I encourage you to try something more tropical! Dice your avocado and mango, mix them together, and sprinkle some salt and pepper on top of your latkes.

Buen provecho!

“Paj-kes” – Korean Latkes
By Becky Jaye ²⁸

Growing up, my mother made these latkes for our family during Hanukkah. They were such a hit that we started serving them at all of our holiday gatherings, including Thanksgiving dinner and family parties. Her recipe includes elements of pajeon, a Korean potato pancake often made with scallions and other vegetables. Pajeon is sometimes served as a single, large pancake, cut into smaller pieces for a family to share.

As we made pajeon and latkes over the years, I realized that they started to become more like one another – and eventually, the two met in the middle! These latkes, for me, represent the harmonious integration of two cultures and traditions brought together by a common love for food and one another.

In this recipe, I’ve added my own spin (carrots!) to the pajeon/latke amalgamation that has filled my family's tummies and hearts with love for decades. When I eat these latkes – or paj-kes, as I call them – I think of the beauty of my parents' worlds coming together, and how each has highlighted the best attributes of two cultures I am immensely proud to call my own.

²⁸ https://reformjudaism.org/jewish-life/food-recipes/paj-kes-korean-latkes?fbclid=IwAR0B_Pv_ab-jXr7qsR8Cs8n1KHfz8LkbqFYQKEjWMP4xSkEfNynVSCdz4Rc

Paj-Kes

(Makes 20 to 30 Medallions)

Ingredients:

- 5 lb. shredded Idaho potatoes
- 2 large, shredded sweet yellow onions
- 6-7 shredded orange carrots
- 3 bunches of scallions, quartered length-wise and sliced diagonally in lengths of 1 to 1.5”
- 5 eggs
- 1.5 cups Korean pajeon potato pancake flour, for example, Beksul Korean Pancake Mix, available in Asian grocery stores and online
- 3 tbsp garlic powder
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1 cup soy sauce
- 3 tbsp of rice vinegar
- Minced garlic, chopped scallions, and sesame seeds to your liking



Directions:

1. Combine all shredded vegetables, keeping any liquids that come about from the shredding process in the mixture. The starches will help the shape and form of the latke stay put.
2. Add eggs. Fold in flour and seasoning with hands until all is incorporated.
3. Heat generous amount of frying oil (e.g. avocado or vegetable oil) in a deep-frying pan.
4. Spoon out latke recipe into oil once it is heated. Make medallions roughly 3-4” in diameter, or the size of your palm. Fry until golden brown on both sides.
5. Serve warm with optional accompanying sauce. These latkes also pair well with kimchi or sour cream and chopped scallions.
6. Enjoy to your heart's content, and share with love.

Happy Hanukkah!

Kehillot haOlam: Hannukah

Lesson 2: Comparative Doughnuts

Goals

- To cook three types of Jelly Doughnuts: Moroccan Sfenj, Israeli Sufganiyot, and Greek Bimuelos.
- To discuss the connections between these foods and Israeli Sufganiyot.

Essential Questions

- What are some ways that Jews around the world have adopted the Israeli Sufganiyah to fit within their culture?
- How do Moroccan, Greek and Israeli Jews celebrate Hanukkah?

Objectives (*Students will be able to...*)

- Explain how these foods came to be recognized as part of the Moroccan-Jewish, Israeli-Jewish, and Greek-Jewish cultures.
- Suggest a possible connection between food, tradition, and customs.

Supplies

- Computer
- Projector
- Frying Pan
- Tape
- Ingredients for Israeli Sufganiyot (*Makes 25 Sufganiyot*)
 - 3.5 cups flour
 - 1/2 tsp salt
 - 1/4 cup sugar
 - 1 Tbsp dry instant yeast
 - 1 egg
 - 3.5 Tbsp unsalted butter cut into small cubes
 - 1 1/4 cups lukewarm milk
 - 1 liter canola oil
 - 1/2 cup strawberry or raspberry jam
 - 1/4 cup powdered sugar
 - Piping bags or Ziploc bags
- Ingredients for Moroccan Sfenj (*Makes 12 Sfenj*)
 - 7 cups (1kg) all-purpose flour
 - 2 Tbsp (17g) active dry yeast
 - 1/2 cup (100g) sugar, plus more for rolling
 - 1/2 tsp salt
 - 3 1/3 cups (800ml) lukewarm water, divided
 - 1 1/2 qt (1.5L) vegetable oil, for deep-frying
- Ingredients for Greek Bimuelos (*Makes 14 Bimuelos*)
 - 1 package dry yeast (2 1/4 teaspoons)
 - 2 cups warm water, divided
 - 1/2 teaspoon salt

Kehillot haOlam: Hannukah

Lesson 2: Comparative Doughnuts

- 1 1/2 teaspoons sugar
- 1 tablespoon oil
- 3 1/4 cups all-purpose flour (14.6 ounces)
- Oil for deep frying
- Honey

Other Things to Prepare

- Set up computer and projector with the following video:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=103&v=eC50LpU6RXw&feature=emb_logo
- Copies of Appendix A: Israeli Sufganiyot, 1 per student
- 1 Copy of Appendix B: Moroccan Idioms about Sfenj, taped around the room
- Copies of Appendix C: Moroccan Sfenj, 1 per student
- Copies of Appendix D: Greek Bimuelos, 1 per student

Kehillot haOlam: Hannukah

Lesson 2: Comparative Doughnuts

Set Induction

(5 minutes)

“ Today we are going to explore three different types of Jelly Doughnuts which are often eaten during Hanukkah: Israeli Sufganiyot, Moroccan Sfenj, and Greek Bimuelos. Many of us probably grew up eating some form of latkes, or potato pancakes.

🕒 How many of you also grew up eating jelly doughnuts?

🕒 Does anyone know why we eat jelly doughnuts during Hanukkah?

- They are popular in Israeli culture.
- They are fried in oil

“ These jelly doughnuts are called Sufganiyot and are often viewed as the quintessential sweet Hanukkah treat. One Israeli folk tale suggests that God gave Adam and Eve sufganiyot to ease their sadness after they were banished from the Garden of Eden. If we break down the word into four parts, we see how this folktale may have come to be: סוף - גן - יהוה - יוד

Write Hebrew on the board for students to see.

“ Reading right to left, סוף (sof) = end, גן (gan) = garden, and יהוה (yud) and יה (hey) often connote God's name. Thus, it can be interpreted to mean: "The end of the Garden of the Lord." A much more common understanding of the word is that it has Greek and Hebrew roots. In Greek, *sufgan* means "fried" and "spongy." In Hebrew, the word *sofeg* (סופג) translates to "absorb." Eating *sufganiyot* and other oily foods is symbolic of Chanukkah's miracle. Similarly, another understanding of *sufganiyah* is that it's a food and symbol which has been *absorbed* into all of the cultures and people of Israel. See the next section for more about this...

Activity 1

(50 minute)

“ Before we dive in, we are going to watch a quick video about the most famous Sufganiyot bakery in Israel: Roladin.

Play “8 Days of Donut Madness” video.

²⁹ <https://www.theicenter.org/resource/culture-sufganiyot>

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Lesson 2: Comparative Doughnuts

Then, pass out Appendix A: Israeli Sufganiyot to each student, or to the group of students focusing on this dish. Read the article and ask the following questions.

- 🕒 Who can summarize for us how *sufganiyot* came to be?
- 🕒 How are *sufganiyot* similar to potato pancakes? How are they different?
- 🕒 How did agriculture play a role in the rise of *sufganiyot*?
 - In the 1500s, the cost of sugar went down with the proliferation of slave-produced sugar in the Caribbean
- 🕒 What does this article list as some of the benefits to *sufganiyot* in Israeli culture?
 - They provided Israelis with jobs as bakers, those who transport *sufganiyot* all over the country, and those in charge of the merchandising behind every box of donuts!

*Next, use the instructions at the end of Appendix A: Israeli Sufganiyot to make *sufganiyot* as a class! As they are enjoying this tasty treat, ask them these questions:*

- 🕒 Is this what you thought *sufganiyot* would taste like? Why or why not?
- 🕒 How do these compare to jelly doughnuts that we eat here in the U.S.?
- 🕒 Could you see yourself making these at home? Why or why not?

This next two activities can be done individually or with the class broken up into two groups. If you choose to teach them individually, you will read/discuss the article as a class, cook the item connected to it, and then go on to the next article and food. Use the cooking time to ask the discussion questions. If you choose to break the class into two groups, they will each read the article, cook the food associated with it, discuss the questions as a group, and then present the article and food to the other group.

Activity 2

(20 minutes)

- “ Now we are going to shift gears and learn about two completely different doughnuts eaten on Hanukah. First, is the Sfenj from Morocco. Similar to what we saw with the *sufganiyot*, *sfenj* actually means sponge in Arabic.

Have students repeat “sfenj” after you.

- “ *Sfenj*’s have significant importance in Moroccan culture as they are reflected in many idioms, or sayings, in Moroccan Arabic. An example of a popular American

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Lesson 2: Comparative Doughnuts

idiom is telling someone to 'break a leg' before a performance. As we know, we are not literally wishing that they break a leg, but rather the opposite – that they do well. Moroccan idioms function very similarly.

“ We are going to delve into these Moroccan idioms as a class. Your task is to try and guess what the idioms mean.

If not done already, tape Appendix B: Moroccan Idioms around the room.

“ In just a moment I am going to break the class into three groups. Each group will be assigned a Moroccan idiom about *sfenj*. You will read the idiom as a group and try to think of as many possible meanings as they can. You will have 5 minutes to write as many as you can down. Then, you will report back to the rest of the class with all of the options. After each group has gone, I will reveal the real meaning.

Break the group into three groups, assigning each one of the Idioms from Appendix B: Moroccan Idioms. Pass out paper and a pen to each group. Give them 5 minutes to brainstorm as many ideas as they can about what their idiom means. Make sure to give them a 2-minute warning. Once time is up, allow each group to list their ideas to the other groups, and then reveal the correct answers from below.

- **Give someone a sfenj and he'll say it's ugly** (صاب سفنجة وقال عوجة), meaning "do not judge a book by its cover" or "do not bite the hand that feeds you."
- **As if hitting a dog with a sfenj** (ابحال إلى ضربتي كلب باسفنجة), meaning a futile endeavor, especially an act of pointless petty revenge (because if someone hits a dog with a sfenj, the dog will eat and like it).
- **Demanding oil from a *sufnāj*** (اطلب الزيت من سفناج), meaning "taking from the needy" (because a *sufnāj*—a sfenj baker—uses large amounts of cooking oil).^{30 31}

Activity 3

(45 minutes)

“ Now we are going to learn about a man named Dan Illouz and his unique connection to *sfenj*.

Pass out copies of Appendix C: Moroccan Sfenj, 1 per student. Read the article as a class, discussing the following questions:

³⁰ <https://archive.aawsat.com/details.asp?article=224823&issueno=9248#.XgdsfNZKjQQ>

³¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sfenj#cite_note-Hassan-9

Kehillot haOlam: Hannukah

Lesson 2: Comparative Doughnuts

- 🕒 How does intersectionality play a role in Dan’s life?
- 🕒 What convinced Dan to make *sfenj*?
 - He could only find *sufganiyot* in Israel
- 🕒 Why do you think many people found Dan’s *sfenj* to be so popular?
- 🕒 Why did Dan choose not to make *sufganiyot*?
- 🕒 What are some of the connections between *sfenj* and *sufganiyot* illustrated in this article?
 - Both come from the same root, both rolled in sugar, both fried

After the discussion, use Appendix C: Moroccan Sfenj to cook sfenj as a class.

Activity 4

(45 minutes)

“ The final doughnut that we are going to explore today is called *Bimuelos*.

Have students repeat “Bimuelos” after you.

“ *Bimuelos* hail from Greece and as you will see, they are similar to *Sfenj* but also distinctly different.

“ Despite the fact that the Hanukkah story is centered around the Maccabees rising up against the Greeks, there is still a thriving Greek-Jewish community in Greece and here in the U.S.

Pass out Appendix D: Greek Bimuelos to each student. Read the article and then discuss the questions below

- 🕒 How does intersectionality play a role in Ethan’s life?
- 🕒 How do you think Ethan feels about being Greek, especially around Hannukah?
- 🕒 How does language play a role in Greek – Jewish culture?
- 🕒 What do you think about the Greek community changing the enemy of the Hanukkah story to be the Syrians instead of the Greeks?
- 🕒 What is the significance of *Bimuelos* in Ethan’s family?

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Lesson 2: Comparative Doughnuts

Now, take some time to make Bimuelos as a class using Appendix D: Greek Bimuelos.

Closure

(10 minutes)

Bring the class back together the discuss the following questions. This can also happen while they are eating.

- ⌚ What do these dishes have in common? How are these dishes different?
- ⌚ What do these dishes teach us about the Jewish communities from which they came?
- ⌚ What are the values behind Dan and Ethan's traditions?
- ⌚ Why do you think it so important for Dan and Ethan to keep or adapt these traditions in the way that they did

Why Do We Eat Jelly Donuts on Hanukkah? ³²

By Aly Miller

Jelly donuts are one of the most symbolic dishes of Hanukkah, but have you ever wondered how that came to be? Of all the delicious fried foods to nosh on — fried pancakes, fried chicken, fried cheese, schnitzel—how did the jelly donut, or sufganiyah (sufganiyot is the plural), rise to popularity? The answer, like all good food questions, has everything to do with agriculture, food politics, and of course, our taste buds.

Oily foods have been made to symbolize the miracle of Hanukkah since the first celebration, but it wasn't until the Middle Ages that jelly donuts became tied to Hanukkah.

Food historian Gil Marks wrote that the first recipe for the jelly donut was found in 1485, in a cookbook printed in Nuremberg, Germany, called the *Kuchenmeisterei* (Mastery of the Kitchen) — one of the first to be printed on Johannes Gutenberg's printing press. The original donut recipe didn't have a hole, but rather was a pillowy pocket of dough, filled with jam. The recipe instructed bakers to make a jam "sandwich" with two circular pieces of dough, to be fried in lard.

The addition of jam was revolutionary, as donuts had been usually a savory dish, filled with mushrooms, cheese or meat. Regardless of the filling, donuts were expensive treats to make, and not widely consumed. Other fried foods, like buckwheat pancakes, fried radish cakes, and fried cheese curds, were the Hanukkah dishes of choice.

Then, in the 1500s, two important jelly donut events occurred: the cost of sugar went down with the proliferation of slave-produced sugar in the Caribbean, and the *Kuchenmeisterei* was translated into Polish. By 1600, jelly donuts, called *paczki*, were beloved through Poland on Christmas, Hanukkah and other special occasions. In Yiddish, they were called *ponchiks*, and fried in *schmaltz*, goose fat, or oil. Interestingly, unfilled donuts, in Yiddish, were simply 'donats.'

Throughout the 19th and 20th centuries, the tradition of jelly donuts traveled with Polish Jews wherever they immigrated. According to Marks:

In Israel...ponchiks soon took the name *sufganiyah* (*sufganiyot* plural), from a "spongy dough" mentioned in the Talmud, *sofgan* and *sfogga*. The word *sphog*, meaning

³² <https://www.myjewishlearning.com/the-nosher/why-do-we-eat-jelly-donuts-on-hanukkah/>

Hanukkah Lesson 2: Comparative Doughnuts

Appendix A

“sponge,” is so ancient that there is a question as to whether it was initially of Semitic or Indo-European origin.

Sufganiyot became specifically tied to Hanukkah in Israel, in the 1920s, when the Israeli Labor Federation declared them the official food of Hanukkah. What do jelly donuts have to do with labor, you ask? While latkes are easy to make at home, sufganiyot provided Israelis with jobs — think of all the baking, transporting, and merchandising behind every box of donuts!

To this day, sufganiyot are hugely visible in Israel in the weeks leading up to Hanukkah, and they're stuffed not only with jelly, but with cream, halvah, or chocolate ganache.

Here, Americans have embraced the Israeli tradition of eating sufganiyot during Hanukkah, indulging in a variety of fried and filled confections.

Israeli Sufganiyot ³³
(Makes 25 Sufganiyot)

Ingredients

- 3.5 cups flour
- ½ tsp salt
- ¼ cup sugar
- 1 Tbsp dry instant yeast
- 1 egg
- 3.5 Tbsp unsalted butter cut into small cubes
- 1 ¼ cups lukewarm milk
- 1 liter canola oil
- ½ cup strawberry or raspberry jam
- ¼ cup powdered sugar
- Piping bags or Ziploc bags



Directions

1. Sift flour into a large mixing bowl. Add the salt and sugar and mix well. Add the yeast and mix.
2. Using a mixer fitted with a hook attachment mix the flour mixture on low speed and add the egg and butter. Gradually add the warm milk and continue mixing for 8-10 minutes until the dough is soft.
3. Make the dough into a ball and place it in a lightly oiled bowl. Cover with a kitchen towel or plastic wrap and let rise until doubled in size, for about 1.5-2 hours.
4. Once the dough has risen, place dough on a lightly floured work surface and using a rolling pin, roll the dough out to ¾ inch thick. Using a 2-inch cookie cutter, cut circles out of the dough, as close to one another as possible.
5. Place the dough circles on a baking tray lined with parchment paper and cover with a clean kitchen towel. Allow to rise again for 20 minutes.
6. In the meantime, heat the oil in a deep-frying pan until it reaches 350F.
7. Place around four dough circles into the oil and fry for 2-3 minutes on each side, until golden brown, but not too brown.

³³ <https://www.myjewishlearning.com/the-nosher/how-to-make-perfect-sufganiyot/>

Hanukkah Lesson 2: Comparative Doughnuts

Appendix A

8. Remove with a slotted spoon and place on a plate lined with paper towels. Repeat with remaining dough. Allow to cool slightly before filling.
9. To fill the sufganiyot: Fill a piping bag with your desired filling. Using a sharp knife, make a small slit on the top the sufganiyot. Place the piping bag inside the slit and fill until you can see the filling on top.
10. Sprinkle with powdered sugar before serving.

"Give
someone a
sfenj and he'll
say it's ugly"

صاب سفنجة وقال
عوجة

"As if hitting a
dog with a
sfenj"

ابحال إلى ضربتي
كلب باسفنجة

"Demanding
oil from
a *sufnāj*
(sfenj baker) "

اطلب الزيت من
سفناج

Hanukkah Lesson 2: Comparative Doughnuts

Appendix C

This Moroccan doughnut is Israel's hottest Hanukkah treat ³⁴ By Andrew Tobin

TEL AVIV (JTA) – The sufganiyah is the plump, shining star of Hanukkah in Israel.

During the holiday season, the famed jelly doughnut poses in the windows of cafés and bakeries across the country. It sparkles with oil and sugar, and shows just enough filling to keep fans interested.

Every year, top chefs compete to give the sufganiyah an edgy new twist, whether its cheesecake filling, mascarpone topping or a chocolate-filled squeeze tube accessory. Israeli TV channels, newspapers and social media are filled with close-up shots and reviews of the most enticing innovations.

Meanwhile, in homes across the country, Israelis quietly fry up a humbler Hanukkah doughnut called the sfinj. The confection hails from North Africa, and is a favorite of Jews whose families came to Israel from the region. But even European Jews have adopted the sfinj and helped push it toward the limelight.

Part of the appeal of sfinjim, the plural for sfinj, is that they are easy to make. Simply take a dollop of dough, poke a hole in the middle and deep fry in vegetable oil. The doughnuts can then be dipped in honey and coated in sugar, usually of the powdered variety.

Israelis of North African descent prepare sfinjim for holidays and special occasions. **Dan Illouz** grew up in Montreal, where his family ate the doughnuts during the eight nights of Hanukkah. When he immigrated to Israel eight years ago, he was dismayed that he could only find sufganiyot, so he began making sfinjim in his kitchen to celebrate the holiday.

During Hanukkah in 2010, Illouz, a 31-year-old public relations manager in Jerusalem, invited a handful of friends over to enjoy the doughnuts with him. Word spread quickly: Last year, about 400 people showed up at his three-bedroom apartment for what has become an annual sfinj party. Illouz expects at least as large a crowd for the third night of this Hanukkah, Dec. 14.



³⁴ https://www.jta.org/2017/12/05/lifestyle/sufganiyot-get-all-the-hype-but-this-humble-moroccan-doughnut-is-israels-hanukkah-staple?_ga=2.106459779.1419940535.1577472110-1960517627.1568346118

Hanukkah Lesson 2: Comparative Doughnuts

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To feed the masses that show up throughout the night and spill into the street, Illouz begins preparing at around 7 a.m., 12 hours ahead of time. He estimated that he fries up about 150 of the doughnuts. It's first come, first serve.

Sfinjim are of course at the center of the event, but Illouz also serves sweet couscous and store-bought Moroccan cookies and beverages. He puts on Moroccan music to set the mood, and when the sun sets, he and his guests light the menorah candles. Needless to say, sufganiyot, plural for sufganiyah, are not on the menu.

"I'm not ideologically opposed to sufganiyot," he explained, "but I do prefer sfinjim. They're just simpler, and they're not quite as unhealthy."

Illouz said his sfinj party is an expression of both Moroccan and Israeli pride, a duality that has become easier to reconcile in recent years. While Mizrahi Jews, or those with roots in North Africa and the Middle East, were long a socioeconomic underclass that faced systemic discrimination in Israel, their culture has lately experienced something of a renaissance.

Illouz said the new hipness of Moroccan traditions is probably part of what draws so many people to his sfinj parties.

"There's definitely an element of that in the fact that people get excited about the party. People want to have a taste of this culture," he said. "What I think is really beautiful is that all Israelis are able to enjoy it."

About half of Israelis are now of Mizrahi descent, though the numbers are becoming blurred by marriage with Ashkenazi, or European Jews, and others. Mizrahi music dominates the Israeli airwaves, with some musicians even singing in Arabic. Mizrahi cuisine, from falafel to shakshuka, is not only popular street food, but is also big at high-end restaurants and on popular cooking TV shows. And Mizrahi celebrations, like the post-Passover Mimouna feast and the henna pre-wedding bridal shower, have been embraced by the mainstream.

Of course, Mizrahi Jews have been contributing to Israeli culture for decades, whether or not it was always appreciated. Some credit them with bringing the tradition of Hanukkah doughnuts to the Jews of Palestine in the first place. According to this theory, sfinjim were then largely superseded by deep-fried Eastern European jelly doughnuts similar to today's sufganiyot. (The oil is a nod to the Hanukkah legend in which the ancient Temple's menorah stayed lit for eight days on a one-day supply of lamp oil.) The Arabic word "sfinj," meaning sponge, was replaced by "sufganiyah," a Hebrew word sharing the same root.

Some Ashkenazi Jews have also started making sfinjim at home, often inspired by Mizrahi friends and family.

Hanukkah Lesson 2: Comparative Doughnuts

Appendix C

Uri Scheft, a co-owner and chef at the high-end bakery chain Lehamim, learned to make the doughnuts from his wife, whose mother immigrated to Israel from Morocco. He included a sfinj recipe in his 2016 cookbook “Breaking Breads: A New World of Israeli Baking,” which celebrates the cuisines produced by the “melting pot” of Israeli society.

Scheft said he has planned for many years to serve sfinjim at his bakeries. But he would first want to set up a prep area so he could serve them fresh to customers.

“The character and the structure of sfinjim is very light, which make them very tasty, but only if they are eaten right away,” he said. “I think this is why bakeries shy away from serving them.”

While it is hard to find a hot sfinj for sale in Israel, it is not impossible.

Keren Kadosh, a pastry chef with a Moroccan background, occasionally serves them at her bustling downtown Jerusalem bakery, Café Kadosh — often in response to requests. At the same time, her lifetime of eating the doughnuts has shaped the way her bakery prepares sufganiyot, which it serves at a rate of a 1,000 day during Hanukkah.

“When the the sufganiyot come out of the fryer, we role it in sugar, and we get that exact same crunch, sweetness and texture,” she explained. “So in a way, we’re participating in the Moroccan culture of blessing each other, which has also become Israeli culture.”

Hanukkah Lesson 2: Comparative Doughnuts

Appendix C

Moroccan Sfenj (Makes 12 large doughnuts)

Ingredients

- 7 cups (1kg) all-purpose flour
- 2 Tbsp (17g) active dry yeast
- ½ cup (100g) sugar, plus more for rolling
- ½ tsp salt
- 3⅓ cups (800ml) lukewarm water, divided
- 1 ½ qt (1.5L) vegetable oil, for deep-frying



Directions

1. In the largest bowl you have, mix the flour and yeast. Add the sugar and salt, and mix with the flour. Pour in about half the water, and begin kneading with your hands—fingers spread open, using lifting motions from the bottom of the bowl to the surface of the dough. Gradually add (all!) the remaining water, and knead for another minute, and no more! This dough must not be over-kneaded. It is very loose, and that's okay.
2. Cover in plastic wrap and set aside to rise, until doubled in bulk. With very wet (dripping with water) hands, work the dough to let out the air (it will return to its original volume). Cover, and let rise again until doubled in bulk. This second rising will be a lot shorter, so you may begin heating up your oil. In a wide pot, heat the oil to 325°F (160°C) on a deep-frying thermometer.
3. Dip your hands in a bowl of cold oil or water. Pinch a ball of dough (tangerine size) and pull it up. With your other hand, pinch under it to cut it off the rest of the dough. Holding the ball of dough with both hands, insert your finger in its center to create a hole, and stretch until the hole is about 1 inch (3.8cm) in diameter. Carefully place the bagel shape into the hot oil. Repeat with the rest of the dough (not forgetting to dip your hands in cold oil or water occasionally).
4. Deep-fry until sfenj are golden, 2–3 minutes on each side. Put the fried sfenj on a paper towel to soak up the excess oil. Dip each sfenj in a bowl of sugar to coat, and serve immediately.

Sfenj must be prepared and fried when they are meant to be served. Don't prepare this dough ahead of time, and don't put it in the refrigerator. When cold, it is hard to work with, and it goes sour very quickly (within 4 hours).

Greek Jewish Hanukkah Is Not A Paradox ³⁵

By Ethan Marcus

I am sure people wonder how you can be Greek and Jewish, especially around Hanukkah, a time when we're taught that the Maccabees proudly rose up against the pagan Greeks and regained Jewish independence. But it has never been a problem for me.

I'm a proud Sephardic Jew and grew up in the small but robust Greek Jewish community in New York. My congregation, Kehila Kedosha Janina, remains the only Greek Jewish Romaniote synagogue in the Western Hemisphere. Unlike Sephardic Jews like me who arrived in the former Ottoman Empire after the expulsion from Spain and spoke Ladino, Romaniote Jews have had a continuous presence in Greece and the former Byzantine Empire for over 2,300 years. These communities only spoke Greek or a Judeo-Greco dialect and practiced unique Jewish customs not found in any other communities.

I don't think my Papou (grandfather), born in the small town of Veria in what is today northern Greece, would've recognized anything about the celebratory practices of "American" Hanukkah. Most of what we mistakenly call American Hanukkah traditions are actually Ashkenazi in origin and, other than lighting the menorah, are quite different than what I grew up with.

In Ioannina, a city in northern Greece that was once a major hub for Romaniote life, Hanukkah was a relatively minor holiday but still celebrated proudly. Romaniote Jews would often cook delicious loukoumades, a classic Greek dessert of fried dough balls in oil with honey and sugar, as opposed to the conventional sufganiyot in Eastern European communities. Growing up in New York, my father would make bimuelos, the Sephardic equivalent of fried dough or matzah meal made for Hanukkah as well as Passover. These delicious treats are what I think of when Hanukkah comes to mind.

Don't get me wrong, there were in fact communities in Greece that grappled with the use of language surrounding Hanukkah, especially with the creation of the modern Greek state. Dr. Devin E. Naar, the Isaac Alhadeff Chair of Sephardic Studies at the University of Washington, wrote that on the eve of the Holocaust, the Jewish community of Salonica, once home to more than 50,000 Jews, published a new prayer book called Sha'are Tefilah. In the Hanukkah section, Naar notes that the author had changed the

³⁵ <https://www.myjewishlearning.com/jewish-and/greek-jewish-hanukkah-is-not-a-paradox/>

Hanukkah Lesson 2: Comparative Doughnuts

Appendix D

classic references in Maoz Tzur from the enemy Greeks to Syrians as a way to avoid sounding anti-Greek, as technically our persecutors were Hellenized pagans living in the region that's today's Syria. Naar also notes, "In the Al ha-Nissim prayer added to the Hanukkah liturgy that refers to the miracles associated with the holiday, the traditional reference to the 'wicked Hellenic government' is quietly changed to the 'wicked government.'"

Yet despite these changes in the Salonican prayer book, I, like many other Greek Jews, reject the notion that being Greek and Jewish is a paradox on Hanukkah. In fact, many theologians in the Greek Orthodox church look at the Maccabees as martyrs who modeled Christian monotheism against evil paganism.

These Hanukkah traditions are a testament to the diverse history and perseverance of the Jewish people, as well as our coexistence with local communities throughout the diaspora, particularly in Greece. This highlights something so rare in today's Jewish world. Indeed, my hope is that as the Jewish community in the United States continues to develop into the 21st century, the conventional Jewish narrative no longer defaults to Ashkenazi Jewry and its traditions. Perhaps this Hanukkah, you'll plan to cook some loukoumades or bimuelos with your children and sing the Ladino holiday song Ocho Kandelikas.

Bimuelos– Sephardic Hanukkah Donuts
(Makes about 14 donuts)

Ingredients

- 1 package dry yeast (2 1/4 teaspoons)
- 2 cups warm water, divided
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 1/2 teaspoons sugar
- 1 tablespoon oil
- 3 1/4 cups all-purpose flour
- Oil for deep frying
- Honey



Directions

1. Stir the yeast into 1 cup of the warm water and allow to proof. Mix in the remaining cup of water along with the salt, sugar and tablespoon of oil. Slowly stir in the flour, and keep stirring until you have a smooth, wet dough. Cover and allow to rise in a warm spot for at least 1 hour.
2. Put 3 inches of oil in a pot suitable for deep frying and bring to 370 degrees F. Line a tray with paper towels. Get a bowl of water ready.
3. Moisten your hands in the bowl of water and grab about 3 tablespoons of the dough. Quickly form it into a rough ball and poke a hole through the center. These are supposed to be rustic, don't spend any time trying to make them perfect. Drop carefully into the oil. Repeat for as many as will fit comfortably in your pot without crowding. Fry until golden brown on one side, then flip and brown the other side. Use a slotted spoon to remove to paper towels.
4. Drizzle with honey (or offer honey for dipping) and serve immediately.

Kehillot haOlam: Hanukkah

Lesson 3: Yemenite Women's Celebration

Goals

- To help students understand why the Yemenite Jewish community celebrates women during Hanukkah.
- To read the story of Judith.
- To see and hear how artists have interpreted Judith's story.
- To discuss ways in which the students can celebrate women of importance on Hanukkah.

Essential Questions

- Why do Yemenite Jews celebrate Jewish women, specifically Judith, during Hanukkah?
- How can we celebrate Judith's heroism?
- What are all of the aspects that make Judith such a complex character in Jewish text?
- Which women in Jewish text can be viewed as heroes?
- How can we celebrate other women in Jewish text during Hanukkah?

Objectives (*Students will be able to...*)

- Articulate how Judith can be viewed as a hero.
- Summarize why Yemenite Jews celebrate women on Hanukkah.
- List other women in Jewish text that they can celebrate on Hanukkah.

Supplies

- Pens, 1 per student
- Tape
- Student's Cell Phones
- Computer or another way to play Alicia Jo Rabins Song "Who Sent the Heat"
- Speakers (*optional*)

Other Things to Prepare

- Copy of Appendix A: Talmud Shabbat 23a Discussion, 1 per student
- Copies of Appendix B: Judith Story, 1 per student
- Copies of Appendix C: Judith as an Apocryphal Character, 1 per student
- 1 copy of Appendix D: Judith Portrayed in Art (1-4), taped around the room "Museum Style"
- 1 copy of Appendix E: Judith Portrayed on Chanukiyot (1-3), taped around the room "Museum Style"
- 1 copy of Appendix F: Judith Museum Notes
- Load "Who Sent the Heat" by Alicia Jo Rabins on a device with sound

Kehillot haOlam: Hanukkah

Lesson 3: Yemenite Women's Celebration

Link: <https://www.girlsintroublemusic.com/songs/who-sent-the-heat/>

- Appendix G: Who Sent the Heat Song Lyrics, 1 per student
- *(Optional)* Appendix H: Who Sent the Heat Song Lyrics – Annotated
- *(Optional)* Appendix I: Judith Song Explanation, 1 per student
- Copy of Appendix J: Women in Jewish Text, 1 per student.
- Copies of Appendix K: Jewish Woman Profile, 1 per student

Note to Teacher

- There are graphic photos on Appendix D: Judith Portrayed in Art #1-3. Use your best judgment as to whether your class is mature enough for them.

Kehillot haOlam: Hanukkah

Lesson 3: Yemenite Women's Celebration

Set Induction

(5 minutes)

“ Today we are going to learn about a Mizrahi Hanukkah tradition.

🕒 Who can remember where Mizrahi Jews originate from?

- Muslim lands like Yemen, Iraq and Baghdad

“ Yemenite Jews celebrate women in Jewish text on the 7th night of Hanukkah. They call this “*Chag haBanot*” which means the Festival of the Daughters. *Chag haBanot* falls on the new moon of the Hebrew month of *Tevet*, which is the sixth or seventh night of Chanukah. (Chanukah is the only Jewish holiday that straddles two months. *Rosh Hodesh*, the celebration of the new month, is classically a women's festival.) One tradition was that women would come to the synagogue, touch the Torah, and pray for the health of their daughters. Mothers would give their daughters gifts, and grooms would give gifts to their brides. Girls who were fighting were expected to reconcile on *Chag haBanot*. Old women and young women would come together to dance. There might be a feast in honor of Judith, where participants would eat cheese to remember Judith's subterfuge (in the story, Judith feeds the enemy general salty cheese to encourage his drinking of wine so that she can kill him once he has passed out), or women might take food from a ritual meal of Talmud scholars and give it to their daughters as protection from harm. There was also a custom of passing down inheritances on *Chag haBanot*.³⁶

Activity 1

(20 minutes)

“ To help us understand why Yemenite Jews celebrate women during Hanukkah, we are going to begin with a text study. The text is the inspiration for the Yemenite practice. In just a moment, I am going to give you two pieces of text that includes some discussion questions. The bolded text is taken directly from Talmud, while the nonbolded is context that is added to better understand the text. With a partner, you are going to read both texts and discuss them, using the discussion questions to help guide you. Then we will come back together as a class.

Pass out Appendix A: Talmud Shabbat 23a Discussion to each student. You can allow them to pick their “chevruta” study partner or assign them. Allow them about 10 minutes to read and discuss the text, and then bring the class back together.

³⁶ <http://www.ritualwell.org/ritual/chag-habanot-festival-daughters>

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Lesson 3: Yemenite Women's Celebration

Bring the class back together and ask the following questions:

- ⌚ What are these texts trying to teach us?
- “ These texts teach us that the reason women must observe mitzvot is because they too were involved in the miracle of Hanukkah. This is why Yemenite Jews celebrate women, specifically Judith, during Hanukkah.

Activity 2

(15 minutes)

- “ Judith is a woman who seduced and assassinated an Assyrian General to lead the Jewish army to a fantastic win. Let's begin by reading more about Judith's story.

Pass out Appendix B: Judith Story to each student. Read the story together as a class. Then, summarize Appendix C: Judith as an Apocryphal Character which provides a better understanding of how Judith fits into the Jewish cannon. Afterwards, discuss the following questions.

- ⌚ Does anything surprise you about this story?
- ⌚ Which moments in this text seem most interesting or dramatic to you?
- ⌚ Why do you think Judith is celebrated in Yemenite Jewish communities?
- ⌚ Is Judith a hero? Why or why not?

Activity 3

(50 minutes)

- “ Now we are going to go to a “Judith Museum.” Around the room you will see various depictions of Judith, in art and on Chanukiyot. We will walk around as a class and discuss each photo.

This can be done a number of ways. You as the teacher can act as “tour guide” for each photo or you can have seven different students volunteer to be the tour guide. You can also break the class into 7 groups, allowing each group to research their photo (see Appendix F: Judith Museum Notes) and teaching it to the rest of the class.

The tour guide will guide the group to each picture one by one, first asking the group to describe what they see. Allow about 2-3 minutes per photo for this initial reflection, allowing the students to look closely and think broadly. Here are some example questions:

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- 🕒 What do you see in this photo?
- 🕒 Who is who in this photo? What are they doing?
- 🕒 How are the characters functioning in relation to one another?
- 🕒 What do you not see in this image?
- 🕒 How would you describe the character of Judith as depicted in this image?
- 🕒 How is this depiction similar to or different from the other works?
- 🕒 What do you like about this image and depiction of Judith? What do you dislike or disagree with?

Once everyone has shared what they see in the image, the tour guide will read the notes from Appendix F: Judith Museum Notes.

Activity 4

(15 minutes)

“ Alicia Jo Rabins is an award-winning poet, singer, songwriter and violinist, who writes about the complicated lives of women in the TaNaKh. She has written many things about Judith, one of which is a song that documents Judith's assassination of Holofernes. In just a moment I am going to play the song and allow you to follow along with the words. Afterwards, we will come back together to discuss the song.

Pass out Appendix G: Who Sent the Heat Song Lyrics to each student. Play the song as the students follow along with the words. If you are interested, I have also provided Appendix H: Who Sent the Heat Song Lyrics – Annotated and Appendix I: Judith Song Explanation if you or your students are interested in Alicia Jo's inspiration for the song. Once you have listened to the song, discuss the following questions.

- 🕒 What is your initial response to this song?
- 🕒 What questions does this song raise for you?
- 🕒 Why do you think Alicia Jo chose this melody for the song?
- 🕒 Do you understand the story of Judith in a different way through this song than you did through the photos? How so?

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Activity 5

(45 minutes)

- “ While we have focused on the character of Judith today, there are many other women we can honor on Hanukkah. One way that you can adapt this practice for yourself is to think about other women who you could honor during Hanukkah. Let's take a moment to brainstorm as many women as we can from Jewish text.

Take about 5 minutes to brainstorm as many women as possible with the students, write each name on the board. Then, pass out Appendix J: Women in Jewish text and pens to each student.

- “ This is a list of all the women that are mentioned in the Jewish text. Take a few moments to look through the list. When you come upon a familiar name, circle it.

Allow a few minutes for students to read through the list and circle the names they recognize.

? What are some of the names that you circled?

? What else did you notice about this list?

- “ As you can see, many of these women do not even have a name in the Jewish text, but rather they are referred to as “Daughters of Zelophehad” or “Wife of Solomon.”

“ Why do you think that is?

“ In just a moment you are going to find a partner. With your partner, you will research one of these women that both of you did not circle (i.e. someone that neither of you are familiar with). Using your cell phone, you can look on Wikipedia, Jewish Women's Archive, MyJewishLearning.com, or any other site that you can find, you will create a profile for your character.

Pass out Appendix K: Jewish Woman Profile to each student.

- “ You will notice that this profile asks for specific things about your character. You may not find everything for your character, and that is okay. As long as you fill out the bottom section about your own Hanukkah practice.

Allow time for students to create their profile using Appendix K: Jewish Woman Profile. When they are done, bring the group back together.

Kehillot haOlam: Hanukkah

Lesson 3: Yemenite Women's Celebration

Closure

(10 minutes)

“ Thank you all for working so hard on your Jewish Woman Profiles! Now I would like each group to go around and share one of your favorite aspects of your character, AND how you plan to honor this woman during Hanukkah next year.

Allow time for students to share about the woman that they researched.

Talmud Shabbat 23a

One extinguishes it and lifts it from its place **and sets it down and lights it**, as only by placing the lamp in an appropriate place could one fulfill the mitzvah of the Hanukkah light. **Furthermore**, there is additional proof that lighting accomplishes the mitzvah.

From the fact that we recite the following blessing over the mitzvah of kindling the Hanukkah light: **Who has made us holy through God's commandments and has commanded us to light the Hanukkah light**, the Gemara suggests: **Conclude from this that lighting accomplishes the mitzvah**, as it is over lighting that one recites the blessing.³⁷

- ⌚ What do you think this text is trying to say?
- ⌚ According to this text, how does someone fulfill the mitzvah of Hanukkah?
- ⌚ Does this text indicate who is or who is not allowed to light the Hanukkah candles?

Rashi Commentary on Shabbat 23a

The Greeks decreed on all the virgins to be wed that they must have relations with the high official first. And also a miracle happened through a woman.

- ⌚ What do you think this text is saying?
- ⌚ Does this text indicate who is or who is not allowed to light the Hanukkah candles?
- ⌚ What is women's role according to this text?

³⁷ Translation adapted from Sefaria.com

Judith Story

Once upon a time, a powerful general named Holofernes declared war against Bethulia (or, in some versions, Jerusalem) with a great army. He besieged the city for many days, making sure no food or drink could enter, so that the people began to starve. The Israelites suffered tremendously during this siege and were in great distress. They were on the verge of surrendering when a young woman named Judith announced that she had a plan.

Judith was a young widow who had been in mourning for three years, since her husband died unexpectedly. A woman of great faith, Judith rebuked the leaders of Bethulia for their intention to surrender and declared that God would act through her. Judith devised a plan to help her people. She removed her mourning attire and dressed in beautiful clothes and jewels, and prepared a bag with wine and (in some versions) kosher cheese. Then she waited until nightfall.

Accompanied only by her maid, Judith left the besieged city under cover of darkness. She walked into the enemy camp, and eventually entered the royal pavilion and came before Holofernes. Since she was exceedingly beautiful, when Holofernes saw her, she found favor in his eyes. He asked, "Who are you? Where do you come from and where do you wish to go?" Judith answered, "I have heard of your wisdom and skill, and since Israel has sinned, I know that you will conquer the city and take possession of it, so I came to save myself and my father's household when you take the city." Judith offered to help Holofernes conquer the city with inside information; the general agreed, and invited her into his tent.

Inside the tent, they feasted. Judith ate the food she had brought; in some versions, Holofernes provided his own food, and in others, he ate the cheese Judith brought in her bag. Either way, Holofernes drank

a great deal of wine, became drunk, and fell asleep. Judith turned her thoughts to God, took Holofernes' sword from his bedpost where it hung, and cut off the general's head. Judith then took Holofernes' head and placed it in her bag. She and her maidservant passed unnoticed through the camp until she reached the gates of Bethulia. There she summoned the gatekeepers and told them to place the general's head as high on the city gates as they could, so that the army would see it when they awoke. When the general's men found his body in the morning, and saw his head on the gate, they fled. The war was over, and Judith's people had won.

[Most modern retellings end here, but there is more to the story. When the people of Bethulia saw the enemy army retreat, they stormed out to attack. They plundered the abandoned enemy camp for thirty days, returning home with great riches, and gave Judith the tent of Holofernes as well as all his silver dinnerware, his beds, his bowls, and all his furniture.

Hanukkah Lesson 3: Yemenite Women's Celebration

Appendix B

All the women of Israel came to bless Judith. Judith led the women in dance, and the men followed in song. Judith offers a song of praise to God, and all the people joined her loudly; they offered thanks to God in Jerusalem, and Judith dedicates Holofernes' objects to God. The city continued to celebrate Judith's victory for three months.

The story concludes: many men desired to marry her, but Judith gave herself to no man all the remaining days of her life. She freed her maid in her old age, and was buried and mourned by all of Israel at the age of one hundred and five. No one ever again spread terror among Israel during the lifetime of Judith, or for a long time after her death.]³⁸

³⁸ Summary by Alicia Jo Rabins – adapted from Ritualwell and Jewish Women's Archive

Judith as an Apocryphal Character

Judith is an apocryphal character, which means she is not included in the Jewish Bible. In fact, there is no evidence the rabbis even considered her story for inclusion, and the oldest version of the story we have is in Greek, not Hebrew.

Because of these uncertain origins, Judith is on the fringes of Jewish text – sometimes almost forgotten, in other eras brought back into focus. She is referred to in some medieval Jewish texts, but is not considered a central character.

In addition, there are many versions of Judith's story, often with conflicting details. For example, in the Catholic version (summarized above) she lives in the fictional town of Bethulia, while in medieval Jewish versions, she lives in Jerusalem.

Finally, the Book of Judith is non-historical; the story combines real and imagined kings, generals and nationalities to create a fictional setting. See "Helpful things to know about Judith" above for details about this.

Despite her story's unclear origins and complicated relationship to world history, over the centuries Judith has been invited into the spotlight of Jewish life. Much of this celebration has come through women in diverse Jewish communities who honored Judith through ritual, food, and celebration, usually around the holiday of Chanukah. Judith has also been imagined over and over in religious and secular art, music, dance and film.

When we discuss Judith's story and create art about her, we join our foremothers and forefathers in bringing Judith back into the center of Jewish study. ³⁹

³⁹ Cite Girls in Trouble Curriculum

Hanukah Lesson 3: Yemenite Women's Celebration
Appendix D: *Judith Portrayed in Art #1*



Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio, *Judith Beheading Holofernes*, 1598-99, Italian, oil on canva

Hanukkah Lesson 3: Yemenite Women's Celebration
Appendix D: *Judith Portrayed in Art #2*



Artemisia Gentileschi, *Judith Beheading Holofernes*, 1614- 1620, Italian, oil on canvas.

Hanukkah Lesson 3: Yemenite Women's Celebration
Appendix D: *Judith Portrayed in Art #3*



Agnes Eva Molnar, ***Looking Upwards – Judith and Holofernes***, from the series “*Profane Holiness*”, 2010, Hungarian, photographic restaging of Artemisia Gentileschi’s *Judith and Holofernes*.

Hanukkah Lesson 3: Yemenite Women's Celebration
Appendix D: *Judith Portrayed in Art #4*



Esther Pam Zibell, *Yehudit [Judith] and the Head*, 2014, French-born artist working in America and Israel, oil on canvas

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Appendix E: Judith Portrayed on Chanukiyot #1



Christian Gottlieb Mueche, ***Chanukah Lamp (Chanukiyah)***, 1761, Breslau (Wrocław, Poland), silver: repoussé, engraved, traced, punched, parcel-gilt, and cast.

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Appendix E: Judith Portrayed on Chanukiyot #2



Johann Adam Boller, ***Chanukah Lamp (Chanukiyah)***,
1706, Frankfurt am Main (Germany), silver: cast, filigree, cloisonné enamel, engraved, traced, punched, and parcel-gilt;
enamel inlays on copper alloy

Hanukkah Lesson 3: Yemenite Women's Celebration
Appendix E: Judith Portrayed on Chanukiyot #3



Unknown artist, **Chanukah Lamp (Chanukiyah)**, probably 19th Century, Italy, copper alloy: cast and chased.

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Judith Portrayed in Art #1

This is one of the most famous paintings of its era. From Wikipedia: “The faces of the three characters demonstrate [Caravaggio’s] mastery of emotion, Judith in particular showing in her face a mix of determination and repulsion. Artemisia Gentileschi and others were deeply influenced by this work, and even surpassed Caravaggio’s physical realism, but it has been argued that none matched his capture of Judith’s psychological ambivalence.”

Notice how Judith’s maid (usually called Abra) is depicted in the shadows, with unflattering features and dressed in rags, and not mentioned in the work’s title. This might spark a class conversation about intersectional feminism, discussing how even as Judith becomes a heroine, her maid remains in servitude. We encourage you to allow students to notice the details on their own, perhaps asking them how they think the maid is being portrayed and their thoughts on it. Don’t feel you have to mention this if it’s outside your comfort zone; the intersectional piece may or may not be relevant to how your class reads the depiction, but it’s something to be aware of. Slavery during Biblical times is another issue that arises in the story of Judith; Jewish thinkers approach this issue from a variety of different angles. Interestingly, Judith frees her maid at the end of the story.

Judith Portrayed in Art #2

Teacher’s note: In this painting, Judith plunges the knife into Holofernes’ throat while her maid helps hold his head down. Note the strength of Judith’s arms, her determined expression, and Gentileschi’s interpretation of her maid as her contemporary (rather than an old woman, as Caravaggio painted her).

Here are some thoughts about the dangers of reading Artemisia’s biography into her art from our art history advisor, Adele Rose Moss:

The following question comes up a lot: did Artemisia paint the face of her rapist, Agostino Tassi, on the body of Holofernes? The short answer is no; that’s an invention of novels and Hollywood movies loosely based on the painter’s life. Mary Garrard, an influential early feminist art historian, was the first to link the abuse Artemisia faced with her depiction of Biblical heroines, calling them “vehicles of personal expression to an extraordinary degree.” Later feminist scholars have disagreed with her approach. Nanette Salomon argues that where the biographies of male artists are used to establish the universal male genius (often featuring stories of precocious child prodigies), in contrast, “a woman’s biography is used to underscore the idea that she

⁴⁰ Adapted from *Girls in Trouble Curriculum*, Alicia Jo Rabins

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is an exception; they apply only to make her an interesting case.” In the same vein, Griselda Pollock writes that Artemisia’s paintings are “reduced to therapeutic expressions of her repressed fear, anger and/or desire for revenge. Her creative efforts are compromised...as personal and relative.”
Where does this leave me as a viewer? When I look at Artemisia’s work, I am deeply moved by her disruption of conventional representations of Biblical heroines. Her Judith is tough and powerful, not at all a seductress. Of course I align Artemisia’s representations with her own story. How could you not? But I am cautious not to sensationalize and exploit her story. The trend of ascribing Tassi’s face to the dying Holofernes does just that.

Artemisia Gentileschi is one of the few female Old Masters painters, the daughter of the great painter Orazio Gentileschi. In addition to her stellar artwork, she became famous for the sensational seven-month trial that ensued when she was raped by Agostino Tassi, who was her teacher and also her father’s former protégé. According to one interpretation of this painting, Artemisia painted herself as Judith, and Tassi’s face as Holofernes, so that this becomes a self-portrait of Artemisia beheading her rapist. However compelling this theory is as a story, it is not generally considered to be factually true. In addition, many scholars now think that the sensationalism around her biography obscured her stellar achievements as an artist.

To quote Wikipedia: The fact that [Artemisia Gentileschi] was a woman painting in the seventeenth century, and that she was raped and participated in prosecuting the rapist, long overshadowed her achievements as an artist. For many years she was regarded as a curiosity. Today she is regarded as one of the most progressive and expressionist painters of her generation.”

Judith Portrayed in Art #3

The artist writes: “This image is from a series entitled ‘Profane Holiness,’ which consists of 7 staged photographs. The title of the series derives from the contradiction between two qualities, i.e. profane and sacred, which are depicted by the profane moment appearing on the T-shirt that contrasts with the spiritual scene of the photo itself. The images are visual paraphrases: remakes of famous paintings and imagery drawn from the collective conscience.

In ‘Looking Upwards’ the concept was to find a corresponding archetypal imagery to the profane scene of tourists looking upwards. The tilted position of their head reminded me of the beheading scene of Holofernes. Due to my interest in gender studies, I chose a painting of a female painter, Artemisia Gentileschi’s work ‘Judith Slaying Holofernes’ as archetype for my photo.”

Agnes Eva Molnar (b. 1980) is a Hungarian media artist. She graduated in 2008 at the Moholy-Nagy University of Art and Design, Budapest, where she gained her doctoral degree in 2016. Gender studies, social phenomena, and family issues lie in the center of

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her artistic interest. She currently works as adjunct assistant professor at the Faculty of Art of Kaposvar University (Hungary).

Judith Portrayed in Art #4

The artist writes: “After hundreds of years of paintings celebrating a jubilant Yehudit [Judith] with a bloody sword, my aim was to reconstitute her to what she might very well have been: a pious, decent woman, who did what she had to do in order to save her people, but was deeply unsettled by the fact that she had to take a human life. This is her true heroism. The head is in a plastic bag to show the timeless virtue of her action [since the plastic lends a modern context to this ancient story].”

Bio, edited from the artist's website: Esther Pam Zibell is a French-born artist who presently lives in Tzfat, Israel, after many years in Crown Heights, Brooklyn, New York. She is a mostly self-taught artist and has been painting since her childhood. In the eighties she became an observant Jew and dedicated her work to Biblical and Hassidic themes, with a blend of imagination and originality.

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Appendix F

Appendix F ⁴¹

Judith Portrayed on Chanukiyah #1

Many American Jews are more familiar with the branched menorah/chanukiyah (like the next image), but until the late 17th century, almost all Chanukah lamps were “bench” shaped like this one.

Here is a detailed analysis of this menorah from the Jewish Museum website: “The lamp represents the heroine Judith holding the head of Holofernes. In this version, a hand pours a pitcher of oil on her head, a device seen also on Italian lamps, where the oil is poured into a seven-branch menorah. This no doubt was meant to equate the miracle of the single jar of oil with Judith’s triumph over Holofernes, which the medieval rabbis also counted as a miracle.

The inclusion of Judith in this late-eighteenth-century lamp may represent yet another association she engendered over time. The lamp was made in Breslau, which had been in Austria until it was seized by Frederick the Great of Prussia in 1741. In the political struggles that ensued, Empress Maria Theresa of Austria took on the qualities of a triumphant Judith standing up to a new Holofernes (Frederick) in the public imagination. Two oratorios about Judith were written around this time, possibly inspired by the empress, and became wildly popular. The renewed interest in Judith in this region, and possibly even Austrian loyalist tendencies, perhaps influenced the artist’s and patron’s choice of a heroic figure for this lamp.”

(Source: Susan Braunstein’s *Luminous Art: Hanukkah Menorahs of the Jewish Museum*, Yale University Press, 2004).

Judith Portrayed on Chanukiyah #2

From the Jewish Museum website:

“A new type of Hanukkah lamp for home use...seems to have been developed in Frankfurt in the late seventeenth century—one with a central shaft and curved arms in the form of the ancient menorah...The two lamps of this type in the museum’s collection were made by Johann Michael’s brother in law, Johann Adam BoIler. The lamps all have tubular arms ornamented with alternating flowers and knobs or bell shaped forms, reminiscent of the biblical description of the first seven-branch menorah crafted during the Exodus. The figure of the biblical heroine Judith is placed at top on a round platform.”

(Source: Susan Braunstein’s *Luminous Art: Hanukkah Menorahs of the Jewish Museum*, Yale University Press, 2004).

⁴¹ Adapted from *Girls in Trouble Curriculum*, Alicia Jo Rabins

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Judith Portrayed on Chanukiyah #3

From the Jewish Museum website:

“In Renaissance Florence, Judith took on a secular symbolism, becoming the embodiment of civic virtue and the struggle of the citizens of Florence against Medici rule....It is in this allegorical guise that Judith is depicted on Italian Hanukkah lamps. She wears not the sumptuous clothing described in the Bible, but a classical wrap of some kind that reveals much of her body. In one hand she raises a sword, in the other she holds the head of Holofernes. This form of representation became the standard iconography for depicting the courage of this heroine.”

(Source: Susan Braunstein's *Luminous Art: Hanukkah Menorahs of the Jewish Museum*, Yale University Press, 2004).

Who Sent the Heat
By Alicia Jo Rabins

Who sent the heat
that fell upon my husband's head
and killed him in the harvest field
three years ago

And what will they eat
the children of a city under seige
by a general whose cup overflows

I fasted for three days
then I arose and dressed myself
in crimson silk and necklaces
and bracelets of gold

Towards the city gates
I walked alone thru empty streets
and I could feel a thousand eyes
watching me go

They said our city was lost, lost
and it was true that we were surrounded
they said our only hope lay with God

But I didn't pray
I brushed my hair with oil of myrrh
and smiled at the general
while he drank his wine

I wondered as I watched him
did he have a wife at home
and would she grieve for her husband
as I grieved for mine

Who Sent the Heat
By Alicia Jo Rabins

Who sent the heat
that fell upon my husband's head
and killed him in the harvest field ¹
three years ago ²

And what will they eat
the children of a city under seige
by a general whose cup overflows ³

I fasted for three days
then I arose and dressed myself
in crimson silk and necklaces
and bracelets of gold ⁴

Towards the city gates
I walked alone thru empty streets ⁵
and I could feel a thousand eyes
watching me go ⁶

They said our city was lost, lost
and it was true that we were surrounded
they said our only hope lay with God ⁷

¹ *"And Manasses was [Judith's] husband, of her tribe and kindred, who died in the barley harvest. For as he stood overseeing them that bound sheaves in the field, the heat came upon his head, and he fell on his bed, and died in the city of Bethulia"* (Book of Judith, Catholic version, 8:2-3)

² *"So Judith was a widow in her house three years and four months"* (8:4)

³ *"Therefore their young children were out of heart, and their women and young men fainted for thirst, and fell down in the streets of the city, and by the passages of the gates, and there was no longer any strength in them"* (7:21). I wanted to emphasize the cruelty of this strategy, a powerful general starving children out in order to win a war.

⁴ *"And she took sandals upon her feet, and put about her her bracelets, and her chains, and her rings, and her earrings, and all her ornaments, and decked herself bravely, to allure the eyes of all men that should see her"* (10:4)

⁵ Although in the story Judith is accompanied by her maid, I imagined her walking completely alone, to further dramatize the moment and the isolation of a single, unarmed body walking through the darkness in a time of war.

⁶ I imagined all the people of the city peeking from their windows. Writing this line, I thought of the parallel story of Yael; after Yael kills the enemy general, Sisera, his mother waits in vain for his return: *"Through the window she looked forth, and peered, the mother of Sisera, through the lattice: 'Why is his chariot so long in coming? Why tarry the wheels of his chariots?'"* (Judges 5:28)

⁷ In the story, Judith admonishes the men for giving God a five-day deadline in order to win the war (*"And they came unto her, and she said unto them, Hear me now, O ye governors of the inhabitants of Bethulia: for your words that ye have spoken before the people this day are not right, touching this oath which ye made and pronounced between God and you, and have promised to deliver the city to our enemies, unless within these days the Lord turn to help you....For if he will not help us within these five days, he hath power to defend us when he will, even every day, or to destroy us before our enemies"* (8:11-15). I chose to twist Judith's words slightly; in the text she is quite pious and criticizes the men in power for not trusting God enough, while in my song I emphasize the fact that they relied on prayer, while Judith takes action.

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Appendix H: Who Sent the Heat Song Lyrics – Annotated

But I didn't pray ⁸
I brushed my hair with oil of myrrh ⁹
and smiled at the general
while he drank his wine ¹⁰

I wondered as I watched him
did he have a wife at home
and would she grieve for her husband
as I grieved for mine ¹¹

⁸ I chose to make a bold statement in this line, which departs in some ways from the original story. In fact, the story describes Judith as a very religious woman; she "*feared God greatly*" (8:8) and she does indeed pray extensively (chapter 9) before heading out to Holofernes' tent.

But I also see Judith's character and her relationship with God as more complex than one of simple piety. First, she rebukes the men in power for relying on God in a way that is both helplessly dependent, and strangely controlling (see note 7). Then, she makes this rather startling declaration: "Hear me, and I will do a thing, which shall go throughout all generations to the children of our nation. You shall stand this night in the gate, and I will go forth with my waiting-woman: and within the days that you have promised to deliver the city to our enemies the Lord will visit Israel by my hand" (8:32-33)

Reading the phrase "The Lord will visit Israel by my hand," I think of Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel's famous statement about participating in the civil rights March on Washington: "I felt my feet were praying." I read Judith's assertion to mean that God will indeed intervene, as the leaders hope, but - and this is a major caveat - only through human action. I imagine a Judith who understands God acting through people, and who bravely risks her life by praying with her body, rather than simply her mouth.

⁹ The Catholic Book of Judith describes her preparations: she "*pulled off the sackcloth which she had on, and put off the garments of her widowhood, and washed her body all over with water, and anointed herself with precious ointment, and braided the hair of her head, and put on a tire upon it, and put on her garments of gladness, wherewith she was clad during the life of Manasses her husband.*" (10:3). The *Me'am Loez* version of the story, a Sephardic Jewish retelling, describes Judith anointing herself with myrrh, which I included here as well. Interestingly, both Esther and Judith prepare themselves to win over a non-Jewish king with careful applications of make-up and oils, and both are associated with post-Biblical holidays (Esther with Purim, and Judith with Chanukah).

¹⁰ "*And Holofernes took great delight in [Judith], and drank more wine than he had drunk at any time in one day since he was born*" (12:20)

¹¹ In these lines, I wanted to give Judith compassion for Holofernes' wife, who—if she existed—would become a widow just like Judith. I imagine a wise Judith who sees the consequences of her actions, realizing that brave as her action is, and necessary to save the lives of children in her city, she might also be causing the same pain she has been experiencing for the past three years since her husband died. Again, I thought of the slain general Sisera's mother waiting for his return in the story of Yael, which is often compared to that of Judith (see note 6): "*Through the window she looked forth, and peered, the mother of Sisera, through the lattice: Why is his chariot so long in coming? Why tarry the wheels of his chariots?*" (Judges 5:28) I am interested in the way the storyteller of Judges imagines the grief of the villain's mother, and inspired by this, I wanted to grant Judith radical compassion for Holofernes' wife.

“Who sent the heat”: Explanation of a Musical Midrash

By Alicia Jo Rabins

Like so many who have read Judith's story over the centuries, I was captivated by her. In particular, I loved the dramatic narrative power of a young woman who singlehandedly wins a battle against all odds, using only her brilliant strategy and her physical beauty.

As I wrote the song, I got to imagine myself as the heroine. I imagined what it would feel like to dress up and walk directly into the enemy encampment, just as my people are on the verge of losing a war. Was Judith unbelievably brave, was her faith unshakeable, or did she simply have nothing to lose? In the annotated song lyrics below, you can find the specific verses I chose to comment on, as well as a few of the details that I added or modified, and additional thoughts about the lyrics.

Musically, I chose a minor melody in three (a waltz rhythm) to reflect the grace and danger of Judith's actions. I also chose to begin where Judith's story begins in the Catholic text – with her young husband's sudden death in the barley fields. I based the beginning of the song, as well as the title, on the mysterious phrase that describes her husband's death – perhaps it's sunstroke? – when “a heat came upon his head.”

In my imagination, Judith's life was going along just fine until her husband's sudden death knocked her off her comfortable trajectory. She seems relatively privileged; even three years after his death, she has a maid and enough resources that procuring a gorgeous dress and jewelry at a moment's notice is no problem. Still, with her life suddenly turned upside down by the loss of her husband, I imagine Judith questioning everything she's been taught, and losing faith in her assigned role as a genteel young woman. And so she puts on her clothes of mourning, and keeps them on for three years, stepping out of her role as a beautiful young woman.

In my re-telling, the experience of losing her husband teaches Judith to see through the structures that hold our lives intact. This causes her great grief, but in a moment of crisis, it also gives her the audacity to challenge those in power, and to risk everything - including her life - in order to save her people. Through her loss, Judith has learned that everything can change in a moment, that we never know what's around the corner, and that cause and effect are not as simple as they seem. And so she sees through the simple faith of the city's leaders, who assume that if God wants them to be saved, God will save them. Instead, Judith takes matters into her own hands, changing the course of (fictional) history.

Does faith in God mean that we have no power over what happens? And conversely, does faith in our own potential for action cancel out the idea of a divine power? Personally, I think this dichotomy is too simple. I understand faith and action as being intimately connected, and I see Judith reflecting this connection.

On one hand, Judith is a woman of great faith. She criticizes the men in power for giving God five days to subdue the enemy army, then accepting defeat (Judith 8:11-15). She

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argues for the omnipotence of God, and the ridiculousness of making bargains or time limits with the Divine power.

On the other hand, Judith also seems to implicitly criticize the leaders' lack of action (8:22-23). God will carry out the victory, Judith says, through her hand. In other words, God is going to act through Judith. God may save the city, but not without the brilliance, bravery and strategy of Judith.

In other words, Judith, from her position of seeming powerlessness, directly contradicts the leaders on both their spiritual and military stance. She asserts that God will indeed save them – through her actions. In this way, Judith – a seeming non-expert – is revealed as the person who understands far more than the experts about the way God works in the world, and is in fact God's instrument in the world. I find this fascinating, and chose to emphasize it in my song.

(That said, I did modify the original story in one significant way. In chapter 9, Judith is extremely pious, repeatedly praying as she prepares to head out of the city into the enemy tent. In my imagining, she doesn't pray with words, she simply takes action – as Heschel might say, praying with her feet.)

Finally, I concluded the song with Judith imagining the ramifications of her action with radical compassion. Yes, she has saved her city, including the children who were about to starve because of the general's cruel siege. But in killing Holofernes, she imagines, she is creating a widow just like herself. I imagine Judith, as she draws the sword down, acknowledging that although her action may be necessary, it is not without consequences; that in order to end a war, she creates suffering elsewhere, in a woman who may be similar to Judith herself.

Judith is a heroine, but she is complicit – as are we all – in an extremely complicated system of power, victory and loss, life and death. In my interpretation, part of claiming her power is claiming the fact that her constructive actions may also have destructive results. To me, this ascribes to Judith the ultimate bravery: the courage not only to act in ways that risk her life, but to look critically at her own actions and her own culpability in the world.

Women in Jewish Text

1. Abigail
2. Abigail (mother of Amasa)
3. Abihail
4. Abijah
5. Abijah (queen)
6. Abishag
7. Ahinoam
8. Aholibamah
9. Asenath
10. Athaliah
11. Azubah (mother of Jehoshaphat)
12. Basemath
13. Bilhah
14. Pharaoh's daughter
15. Cozbi
16. Daughters of Zelophehad
17. Deborah
18. Delilah
19. Dinah
20. Elisheba
21. Ephah
22. Ephrath
23. Esther
24. Eve
25. Gomer (wife of Hosea)
26. Hagar
27. Hannah
28. Hazelelponi
29. Hephzibah
30. Huldah
31. Iscah
32. Jael
33. Jedidah
34. Jehosheba
35. Jemima
36. Jephthah's daughter
37. Jezebel
38. Jochebed
39. Judith
40. Keren-happuch
41. Keturah
42. Keziah
43. Leah
44. Lot's daughters
45. Lot's wife
46. Maacah
47. Mahalath
48. Milcah
49. Miriam
50. Naamah (Genesis)
51. Naamah (wife of Solomon)
52. Naomi
53. Nitzevet
54. Orpah
55. Peninnah
56. Pharaoh's daughter
57. Potiphar
58. Puah
59. Rachel
60. The widow of Zarephath
61. The woman of Shunem
62. Rebecca
63. Rizpah
64. Ruth
65. Sarah
66. Serah
67. Sheerah
68. Shiphrah
69. Shulamite
70. Sisera's mother
71. Tahpenes
72. Tamar (daughter of David)
73. Tamar (Genesis)
74. Tharbis
75. The Levite's Concubine
76. Tirzah
77. Tomb of the Matriarchs
78. Vashti
79. Wife of Jeroboam
80. Wife of Manoah
81. Wife of Phinehas
82. Wise woman of Abel
83. Witch of Endor
84. Wives aboard Noah's Ark
85. Woman of Shunem
86. Woman of Tekoa
87. Woman of Thebez
88. Zeresh
89. Zeruah
90. Zeruiah
91. Zibiah
92. Zilpah
93. Zipporah
94. Zipporah at the inn

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Appendix K

Jewish Woman Profile

Name:

Photo:

Friends and Family

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Main Events:

Interests:

Relationship to God:

Lessons we can learn from _____:

Ways we can honor _____ during Hanukkah:

Kehillot haOlam: Hanukkah

Lesson 4: Global Candle Lighting

Goals

- To discuss the history of the Ladino language and how it is being revived today.
- To understand why the song “*Ocho Kandelikas*” has remained a prominent Ladino Hanukkah song despite Ladino being a diminishing language.
- To listen to other artists’ renditions of “*Ocho Kandelikas*” and other ladino inspired Hanukkah songs.
- To sing *Ocho Kandelikas* in Ladino.

Essential Questions

- Why is it important that the Ladino language remain alive today?
- What is the significance of “*Ocho Kandelikas*” in Latin-Jewish culture?

Objectives (Students will be able to...)

- Sing “*Ocho Kandelikas*” in Ladino.
- Analyze why Ladino is a dying language.
- Articulate two ways that Ladino is being revived today.

Supplies

- 8 Large Post It Notes
- Tape
- Markers
- Computer or another way to play “*Ocho Kandelikas*”
- Speakers (*optional*)

Other Things to Prepare

- 1 Copy of Appendix A: Modern Commentary Text Study printed and taped in the middle of a large Post It Notes (so that there is room to write around it) which is then taped onto the walls around the classroom.
- Copies of Appendix B: *Ocho Kandelikas*, 1 per student
- Load all songs on device with speakers
 - Idina Menzel song*: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GN9t_EOJBbU
 - Sarah Aroeste Song*: <https://saraharoeste.com/together-endjuntos-2017>
- Copies of Appendix C: Idina Menzel Article, 1 per student
- Copies of Appendix D: Sarah Aroeste Article, 1 per student

Kehillot haOlam: Hanukkah

Lesson 4: Global Candle Lighting

Set Induction

(5 minutes)

- ⌘ How are we supposed to light the Hanukkah candles?
 - Left to right
- ⌘ How are we supposed to put the candles into our Chanukiyah for Hanukkah?
 - Right to left
- “ Exactly! The candles are placed in the chanukiyah from right to left (just as Hebrew is written from right to left), but are lit from left to right. The shamash candle is always the first one lit, and is used to light the others, starting with the left-most one. (Think of it as lighting the candle representing the newest night first.) ⁴²

Activity 1:

(15 minutes)

- “ Today we are going to discuss how candle lighting plays a role in Hanukkah celebrations around the world. More specifically, we are going to explore a Ladino song “Ocho Candelikas” and how it has been revived in recent years.
- “ To begin, we are going to honor a custom of the Moroccan Jews who study 8 texts connected with light and candles during Hanukkah.
- “ As you will notice, the 8 texts are posted around the room. In just a moment, each of you is going to walk around, read each text and comment on it in whatever ways feels meaningful to you. This is called “modern commentary” because you are creating your own commentary on the text. These comments can be in the form of questions, something that the text reminds you of, or whatever else comes to mind. You can also comment on other students’ comments if that feels more meaningful. You will go around to each text twice so that you can also see who has commented on your comments. Your task is to think about how these texts relate to Hanukkah. Some will seem obvious, while others are not. Once everyone is done, we will come back together as a class.

Give each student a marker and allow them to walk around the room, commenting on each of the texts. Remind them to go back through a second time to allow them to see who commented on their text and add more comments if they would like. Then, bring the group back together.

Begin by reading some of the comments on various posters. Then, ask the following questions.

⁴² <https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/hanukkah-candle-lighting-ceremony/>

Kehillot haOlam: Hanukkah

Lesson 4: Global Candle Lighting

- 🕒 Which texts did you like? Which did you dislike? Why?
- 🕒 What do these texts say about lighting candles on Hanukkah?
- 🕒 What traditions came out of these interpretations?
- 🕒 What values do you think inspired these traditions?
- 🕒 Why was it so important for these communities to keep these traditions in the way that they did?

Activity 2:

(20 minutes)

- 🕒 Who can remember what we learned about the Ladino language several weeks ago?
- “ Here is a review: Ladino, also known as Judeo-Spanish, was, from the Spanish Inquisition (1478) until World War II (1939), the primary language spoken by thousands and thousands of Jews throughout the Mediterranean. It is essentially 15th-century Spanish, with words mixed in from Portuguese, French, Italian, Arabic, Greek, Turkish and Hebrew — and it is rich with music, poetry, proverbs, folktales and more. Ladino is no longer spoken anywhere as a first language and estimates put speakers with Ladino familiarity at just 200,000 worldwide. ⁴³
- 🕒 What does it mean that Ladino is no one’s “first language”? What are possible implications of that long term?
 - Eventually there could be no one speaking this language.
- “ One way that Ladino has stood the test of time is through the Hanukkah song “Ocho Kandelikas” or “Eight Little Candles.” Ocho Kandelikas is a simple but catchy Hanukkah song which describes a child's joy of celebrating the holiday and of lighting the candles in the menorah in particular. It was written by Flory Jagoda, a Jewish-American composer, singer and guitarist, born in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, in 1925. ⁴⁴ Jagoda, who is now 95, was born in a Bosnian Jewish family and raised in the Sephardic tradition. After escaping Nazi-controlled Yugoslavia at age 16, she first went to Italy, then the United States. Most of her music has focused on reviving Sephardic songs sung in Ladino, as well as recording new ones.

Pass out copies of Appendix B: Ocho Kandelikas to each student. Read the English translation first.

- 🕒 What thoughts come to mind when you read these lyrics?

⁴³ <https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/how-to-learn-ladino/>

⁴⁴ https://judaism.wikia.org/wiki/Ocho_kandelikas

Kehillot haOlam: Hanukkah

Lesson 4: Global Candle Lighting

- 🕒 Why do you think this song was a popular children’s song during Hanukkah?
- 🕒 How can you imagine this song sounding?
- “ Now we are going to listen to the song.

Take a moment to listen to Ocho Kandalikas. You may want to listen to it twice, encouraging students to sing along the second time. Then, discuss the following questions.

- 🕒 What thoughts come to mind when you hear this?
- 🕒 Does the melody match what you thought it would sound like?

Activity 3

(20 minutes)

- “ This song has been adapted by many artists, especially in recent years.
- 🕒 Why do you think that could be?
- “ In 2019, Idina Menzel released her version of Ocho Kandelikas. Idina Menzel is an actress, singer, and songwriter who is best known for her performances in the original casts of Broadway musicals *Rent* and later *Wicked*. Now, a new generation knows her as the voice of Elsa in *Frozen* and her Oscar and Grammy Award winning song “Let it Go.”
- “ Let’s take a moment to read a bit about this new version of Ocho Kandelikas.

Pass out Appendix C: Idina Menzel Article to each student. Then ask the following questions.

- 🕒 Why is Idina Menzel’s version of Ocho Kandelikas so significant?
- 🕒 What do you think about this song being included in a Christmas album by a Jewish artist?
- 🕒 Why do you think she chose to do this?
- “ Now let’s take a moment to listen to her version of “Ocho Kandelikas.”

Play Idina Menzel’s Ocho Kandelikas using this link:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GNgt_EOJBbU. Then, discuss the following questions.

- 🕒 How does this version compare to the other version of Ocho Kandelikas?
- 🕒 Which do you like better?

Kehillot haOlam: Hanukkah

Lesson 4: Global Candle Lighting

🕒 Why do you think she added English lyrics into her version? What do you think about that decision?

🕒 What do you think about the headline of the article? (i.e. the fact that this is a “sexy” Hanukkah song?)

Activity 4

(25 minutes)

“ Sarah Aroeste is another artist who has adapted Ladino songs to fit today’s world. Known as the “Reviver of Ladino Music,” Sarah Aroeste has created an entire album for kids to enjoy and listen to Ladino. Let’s take a moment read a little about her.

Pass out Appendix D: Sarah Aroeste Article, to each student. Then, discuss the following questions.

🕒 What is Sarah’s background?

- She is a Sephardic Jew whose ancestors are from Greece.

🕒 What inspired Sarah to recreate “Ocho Kandalikas?”

- She wanted her daughter to have access to children’s Ladino music so that she could better understand her heritage.

🕒 What is Sarah worried about?

- The way we transmit culture has changed and so she is worried that if we don’t start switching gears toward children and education, the Ladino tradition will get lost completely.

🕒 How does Sarah’s music differ from other Ladino music today?

- Her music is written for kids and is inspired by Ladino melodies that she heard as a kid.

“ Now we are going to listen to two of Sarah Aroeste’s song titled “8 Days Sephardic” and “Bimuelo.”

Play Sarah Aroeste’s “8 Days Sephardic” using this link:

<https://saraharoeste.com/together-endjuntos-2017> *Then, discuss the following questions.*

“ As you will notice, this song doesn’t only talk about Hanukkah.

🕒 What other holiday does this discuss?

🕒 How does this song compare to the other’s we have heard today?

Kehillot haOlam: Hanukkah

Lesson 4: Global Candle Lighting

“ Now we are going to listen to Sarah Aroeste’s second song titled “Bimuelos.” Bimuelos are Sephardic version of fried dough that is often eaten during Hanukkah. This song also features a rapper named Kosha Dillz

Lesson 2 of this unit discusses Bimuelos in greater detail. If you did that lesson with your students, remind them of what they learned.

Play Sarah Aroeste’s “8 Days Sephardic” using this link: <https://saraharoeste.com/together-endjuntos-2017> Then, discuss the following questions.

- 🕒 How does this song compare to the other songs we have heard today? What is similar? What is different?
- 🕒 What do you think of Sarah’s decision to add Kosha Dillz into this song?

Activity 5

(20 minutes)

- “ Now is your time to shine! In just a moment, I am going to split you into groups. In your group, you will create your own Hanukkah song. This song should be inspired by at least one of the songs we heard today in some way, but the lyrics are up to you (as long as they relate to Hanukkah in some way). I will give you 20 minutes to work as a group, and then we will come back together to hear each other’s songs.
- “ The only rule is that you must use at least 1 of the following Ladino words in your song:
- *ha-BEAR-es BWE-nos* - Good news!
 - *dez-ma-zal-A-do de MEE* - Pity me! I’m out of luck.
 - *HAD-ras ee bar-an-AS* - An outrageously big fuss. Being pretentious and really noisy at the same time.

Break student into group of about 3-4 students in each group. Allow time for students to create their song, giving them 10, 5, and 2-minute warnings along the way to pace them.

Closure

(5-10 minutes)

After 20 minutes, bring the group back together to present their songs to the rest of the group. If students feel comfortable, you can video record them singing and post it on your synagogues social media page(s) around Hanukkah.

How many lights should one kindle?

On the first night, one kindles one [light]. From then on one continues to add one each night, until on the last night they are eight. And even if the household members are many, they should not kindle more. And some say that every one of the household members kindles and such is the widespread custom. And they should take care to each place their lights in a unique place, so that it will be apparent how many lights they are kindling.

- *Shulchan Arukh, Orach Chayim*
671:2

The Sages taught: It is a mitzvah to place the Hanukkah lamp at the entrance to one's house on the outside, so that all can see it. If one lived upstairs, one places it at the window adjacent to the public domain. And in a time of danger, one places it on the table and that is sufficient to fulfill one's obligation.

-Shabbat 21b:8

One must kindle another light in addition to the Hanukkah lights in order to use its light, as it is prohibited to use the light of the Hanukkah lights. And if there is a bonfire, one need not light an additional light, as one can use the light of the bonfire. However, if one is an important person, who is unaccustomed to using the light of a bonfire, even though there is a bonfire, one must kindle another light.

- Shabbat 21b:9

God said, “Let there be lights in the expanse of the sky to separate day from night; they shall serve as signs for the set times—the days and the years; and they serve as lights in the expanse of the sky to shine upon the earth.” And it was so. God made the two great lights, the greater light to dominate the day and the lesser light to dominate the night, and the stars.

- Genesis 1:14- 16

According to this halacha, lighting one candle on each night of Hanukkah is sufficient. But all communities added splendor to this mitzvah and took it upon themselves to light one candle on the first day, two candles on the second, and so on, until the eighth day in which (we) light eight candles. And the Sephardic and Mizrachi custom is that one family member lights the candles and by this, all the members of the family have fulfilled their obligation; whether there are many or few, whether they are present at the time of the lighting or not.

- *Rabbi David Yossef, Sidur Yichveh
Da'at, Machon Yichveh Da'at,
Jerusalem 2005*

The precept of lighting the *Hanukkah* lamp is exceedingly precious, and one should carefully observe it in order to acclaim the miracle, ever praising and thanking God for the miracles which he has performed for us. Even if one has nothing to eat except what he gets from charity, he should borrow, or sell his garment, to buy oil and lamps and light them.

- Mishneh Torah, Scroll of Esther and Hanukkah 4:12

We kindle these lights on account of the miracles, the deliverances and the wonders which thou didst work for our fathers, by means of thy holy priests. During all the eight days of Chanukah these lights are sacred, neither is it permitted us to make any profane use of them; but we are only to look at them, in order that we may give thanks unto thy name for thy miracles, thy deliverances and thy wonders.

- *Siddur Ashkenaz, Festivals, Chanukah, Service for Lighting Chanukah Candles, Hanerot Hallalu*

In Sephardic communities, the custom is for the head of the household to light the candle of the day and the rest of the candles that are added for splendor, are given to the children who have reached school age, to light. The extra candle, the shamash can be lit by smaller children who have not started their education to inspire them with a love of mitzvot and to teach them.”

*- Makor Chaim by Rabbi
Haim David Halevi*

Ocho Kandelikas

Ladino Lyrics

Hanukah linda sta aki, ocho kandelas para mi, O...

Una kandelika, dos kandelikas, tres kandelikas, kuarto kandelikas, sintyu kandelikas,
sej kandelikas, siete kandelikas, ocho kandelas para mi.

Muchas fiestas vo fazer, kon alegria i plazer,
Muchas fiestas vo fazer, kon alegria i plazer, O...

Una kandelika, dos kandelikas, tres kandelikas, kuarto kandelikas, sintyu kandelikas,
sej kandelikas, siete kandelikas, ocho kandelas para mi.

Los pastelikos vo kumer, kon almendrikas i la myel,
Los pastelikos vo kumer, kon almendrikas i la myel. O...

Una kandelika, dos kandelikas, tres kandelikas, kuarto kandelikas, sintyu kandelikas,
sej kandelikas, siete kandelikas, ocho kandelas para mi.

English Translation

Beautiful Hanukkah is here. Eight candles for me, Oh...

One little candle, two little candles, three little candles, four little candles, five little candles,
six little candles, seven little candles, eight candles for me.

There will be a lot of parties, with joy and happiness,
There will be a lot of parties, with joy and happiness, Oh...

One little candle, two little candles, three little candles, four little candles, five little candles,
six little candles, seven little candles, eight candles for me.

We're going to eat little pastries, with small almonds and honey,
We're going to eat little pastries, with small almonds and honey. Oh...

One little candle, two little candles, three little candles, four little candles, five little candles,
six little candles, seven little candles

Idina Menzel Sings a “Sexy Hanukkah Song” In Ladino ⁴⁵
By Emily Burack

Idina Menzel is having a year. She is fresh off a star turn in *Frozen 2* as Elsa and in *Uncut Gems* as Dinah, the wife of Howard (played by none other than Adam Sandler, who’s getting early Oscar buzz for his most Jewish role to date). She made an appearance in *Rent: Live*, and is in pre-production for a new musical version of *Cinderella*.

But that’s not all! The Jewish mom just released a Christmas album, *Christmas: A Season of Love*, and went on a three-city tour in support of it, including a performance at New York’s Carnegie Hall.

Hold up: a Christmas album? By a Jewish person? Not that uncommon! Barbra Streisand has four Christmas albums, Carole King has recorded one, even William Shatner (yes, Captain Kirk!) has one. Plus, many great Christmas songs were, in fact, written by Jewish people.

As it happens, this is Menzel’s second holiday album — the first, *Holiday Wishes*, came out in 2014. At the time, she said, “I know I’m Jewish. But a lot of famous Jewish people have written Christmas songs, so I’m going to try out some of their songs on the album. I’m glad I’m not singing about Jesus.”

This new album, however, seems extra special. Why? In addition to songs with Ariana Grande, Billy Porter, and her fellow *Frozen* co-star Josh Gad, “*Christmas: A Season of Love*” also features not one but two Hanukkah songs!

One, “Walker’s 3rd Hanukkah,” is the audio of Menzel and her son, Walker, saying the Hanukkah blessing. Walker imitating his mom is maybe the cutest thing we’ve heard in a long time. Seriously, listen to it. We’ll wait!

As Menzel explains in the track description, “I was trying to teach him what the prayer was to light the candles for the menorah at Hanukkah. I want people to feel that it’s very personal and they can relate to it no matter what religion and how they celebrate.” Go ahead and listen to the track a few dozen more times. We won’t judge!

“Ocho Kandelikas” is a Ladino Hanukkah song. (Ladino is a Jewish language that is also called Judeo-Spanish; it can be best described as a mix of 16th-century Spanish, Hebrew, Turkish, and other languages.) The song’s title translates to “Eight Little Candles,” and it was written by Flory Jagoda, a Sephardic composer, in 1983.

⁴⁵ <https://www.kveller.com/idina-menzel-sings-a-sexy-hanukkah-song-in-ladino/>

Sarah Aroeste: Children’s Album Renews Jewish Ladino Tradition ⁴⁶

By Team B’chol Lashon

It was not until she was already on her way to adulthood, that singer Sarah Aroeste discovered the connection between her Sephardic roots in Greece and her love of music with the Sephardic musical traditions in Ladino. Becoming a mother for the first time, she did not want her daughter to wait as to learn to love Ladino music. Not finding kid-friendly Ladino music, she did what any singer song-writer would do, she began to write her own!



The results of that effort will be out this month, with the release of *Ora de Despertar – Time to Wake Up* – a groundbreaking album of children’s music entirely in Ladino. Though it is the first of its kind for children, the album is also one of the few works made up of entirely new songs. Ladino was the language spoken by Jews, not only from Greece and Macedonia, like Aroeste’s family members, but throughout the Sephardi diaspora. Ladino was the language the Jews took with them from Spain when they were forced to flee in 1492. But over time fewer people use Ladino as an everyday language. “Although I didn’t grow up speaking Ladino myself, I heard my relatives speak it,” explains Aroeste, and she wanted to pass it on to the next generation.

“My desire in writing this album was to fill the gap,” she continues. “To share with my daughter music from her heritage that she would relate to. The way we transmit culture has changed so much. I’m incredibly worried that if we don’t start switching gears toward children and education, our beautiful Ladino tradition will get lost. For kids, the title track is simple, playful, but for us grownups, it’s a serious wake-up call.”

To do so, Aroeste created songs that touch on the topics that are fun for kids, balancing catchy tunes with content that adults will enjoy as well. There are animal sounds and mealtime songs as well as tributes to love and parenting. The arrangements are upbeat and engaging, with contemporary sounds and instrumentation, an approach that reflects Aroeste’s ongoing efforts to reinvigorate Ladino music and to write new material with centuries-old roots.

Studying in Israel, Aroeste learned the classical Ladino repertoire which has many ballads, with epic themes of high drama, sensuality, and family stories that were appropriate for singing around the table at big gatherings but were not necessarily child-friendly. The songs related to children’s experiences are few and far between, albeit gorgeous. “There are a few beautiful lullabies that a lot of people know,” explains Aroeste, “and there are some playful songs by contemporary songwriters like Flory Jagoda,” who wrote “Ocho Kandelikas,” a beloved Hanukkah tune.

⁴⁶ <https://www.myjewishlearning.com/jewish-and/childrens-album-renews-jewish-ladino-tradition/>

Hanukkah Lesson 4: Global Candle Lighting

Appendix D

Aroeste, however, envisioned something different, the kind of ditties she heard on the stack of albums friends and family gave her baby daughter. Little snippets of melodies came to the singer, who has won widespread acclaim for her virtuosic interpretations of traditional songs. But it took several years for the project to come to fruition.

“When I finally decided to go for it, I realized I’d never written for kids before, recalls Aroeste. “I had no idea what would fly. It’s a totally different style melodically, lyrically, to make music especially for children. I came up with a list of very general topics that I thought would work well for a children’s song, the words and concepts. ”

Finding the words, it turned out, was no simple task. Aroeste crafted the lyrics herself, then shared her drafts with Ladino native speakers. She uncovered a fascinating divergence of opinions: Someone from Rhodes would insist you had to say something one way, while someone from Izmir had a completely different idiom for the same thing.

“Finally,” Aroeste says, “one of my advisors told me to do what sounded best to me, as they were my poems, my songs. I had to make the decision for myself.”

In the end, Aroeste found the right turn of phrase to fit her sprightly melodies. Some songs are geared for the youngest listeners, filled with fun-to-sing lines (like “Mi famiya”), while some aim for more sophisticated, slightly older children, adding a bit of silliness to the learning process (such as “Nochada Buena”). Some of the most moving tracks chronicle Aroeste’s own moments as a mother and a mother-to-be. The lullaby “Kualo Tienes?” sprang from a particularly tear-filled evening, when Aroeste longed to soothe her little one, and “Komo vas a ser?” reflects Aroeste’s musings as she thought of her still in-utero daughter’s future.

Though it began with her family roots, the project has wide appeal. Aroeste envisions a broad audience for her newest venture, be they Jewish, Ladino-speaking, or simply curious. There are videos that Aroeste created together with a Spanish animator that go along with each song. She also has a songbook to make singing along a breeze, and plans to make board books adults can enjoy with youngsters.

“I feel so strongly about this album, this project,” Aroeste states. “There are no other Ladino resources for children, and people want them. They are interested in this culture and are struggling to figure out how to keep the tradition alive. I truly believe that cultural transmission will only happen if we get creative about the transmission process.”

Kehillot haOlam: Hanukkah

Lesson 5: Authentic Assessment

Goals

- To synthesize and apply the learning from lessons 1-4.
- To create a Hanukkah practice that feels authentic to them
- To honor the Hanukkah practices that they have explored throughout this unit.

Essential Questions

- What have I learned from this unit?
- How can I take what I've learned into my life today?
- How can the learning from the unit impact my current Hannukah practice?

Objectives (*Students will be able to...*)

- Synthesize the learning and articulate their takeaways that occurred between lessons 1-4.
- Summarize how they plan to honor the Hanukkah traditions learned throughout this unit.

Notes to the Educator

This lesson looks the same for every unit. While the content and number of lessons in each unit differ, this final lesson will include an authentic assessment of the student's choosing. This lesson lists some options for the students, however there are an endless number of options. As best you can (within reason) encourage students to think creatively regarding how they want to show their learning on this day. For many of these options, it is advised that they choose their authentic assessment assignment *before* the unit begins, as they may need to do things throughout the lessons to contribute to this assessment. Instruct them to do a different Authentic Assessment for each unit.

As the educator, you can also decide that every student does the same assignment but adjusts it to appeal to their needs and understanding of the material. If that is the case, it is advised that you choose 1 option per unit so that they do not duplicate assignments between units.

Kehillot haOlam: Hanukkah

Lesson 5: Authentic Assessment

Set Induction

(10 minutes)

- “ We have officially completed our discussion on Hanukkah around the world. Today you will do what we call an “authentic assessment” of the learning done throughout this unit.
- ⌚ What do you think authentic assessment means?
- ⌚ How do you define each of these terms?
- “ An authentic assessment is a way for me to gauge what material was learned throughout a given time.
- ⌚ What are some ways that this looks in school?
- Tests, quizzes, papers
- “ This assessment will be neither of those things. This is an *authentic* assessment so each of you will create something that is meaningful to you. You can certainly write a paper, but I want to encourage you to think more creatively. This is based on the assumption that a project that might feel authentic to one person, could feel inauthentic (for any number of reasons) to someone else. As confirmation students, you are mature enough to take the learning we have explored into your lives in any number of ways and you will get to decide how to do that!
- “ In just a moment I am going to list a variety of authentic assessment ideas that you could do for this Hanukkah unit. If none of these speak to you, I am happy to bring in other ideas. The asterisk (*) indicates the assessments that are unique to this unit. There are 2 criteria: it must show what you have learned in some way and it should be something that you are excited to create.

Activity 1

(10-15 minutes)

- “ Let’s begin by reviewing what we have learned during our exploration of Hanukkah around the world.

Encourage students to list as many things as they can remember first, then you can jump in to remind them of details. Write key words of their answers on the board (i.e. “Sfenj.”) Below is a list of activities for your guidance.

Lesson 1: Comparative Potato Latkes

- Cooked Indian Vada Pav and read Eddna Samuels article about being a Jew in India.

Kehillot haOlam: Hanukkah

Lesson 5: Authentic Assessment

- Cooked Mexican plátanos fritos and read Julia Hernandez Nierenberg’s article about being a Mexican Jew.
- Korean “Paj-kes” and Becky Jaye’s article and podcast about being a Korean Jew.

Lesson 2: Comparative Jelly Doughnuts

- Learned the history of Sufganiyot and Sufganiyot culture in Israel
- Cooked Israeli Sufganiyot
- Explored Arabic idioms about sfenj
- Cooked Moroccan Sfenj and read article about Dan Illouz’s Sfenj celebration in Israel
- Cooked Greek Bimuelos and learned about Greek Jewish culture from Ethan Marcus’s article

Lesson 3: Yemenite Women’s Celebration

- Chag haBanot – Festival of the Daughters on 7th night of Hannukah
- Discussed original text where this idea comes from
- Explore the character of Judith: her story, her heroism, and how she is depicted in art
- Sung Alicia Jo Rabin’s song about Judith
- Explored other Jewish women (via creating profiles) and how we can honor them on Hanukkah

Lesson 4: Global Candle Lighting

- Started with Moroccan practice of exploring 8 Jewish texts about Hannukah / candle lighting
- Explored the history of the Ladino language
- Listened to famous Ladino Hanukkah song “Ocho Kandelikas”
- Compared it to Idina Menzel’s version “sexy” version released in 2019
- Explored Sarah Aroeste “the Reviver of Ladino Music”
- Listened to two Sarah Aroeste songs: 8 Days of Sephardic and Bimuelos featuring Kosha Dillz
- Creating our own Hanukkah song inspired by these artists

Activity 2

- “ Now it is your turn to create something meaningful. I am going to list a variety of options for you to choose from, but if you have other ideas I am open to them.

Kehillot haOlam: Hanukkah

Lesson 5: Authentic Assessment

Organize a Hannukah Seder *

- Create a Seder that is inspired by the myriad of foods eaten around the world during Hanukkah. This Seder should include a brief history of the community and the reasons why each food is significant to Hanukkah.

Spice Craft *

- Using the spices commonly used in various Hanukkah foods, create a piece of art so that others can experience these foods through the smells of the spices involved. Start by creating an image, and then “color it in” using glue and spices. This could be placed somewhere in the synagogue with a plaque explaining the learning acquired through the unit.

Explore other Hanukkah Traditions *

- Explore other unique Hanukkah traditions that are practiced around the world. Create something of your choice that exemplifies your learning.
- Below is a list of some ideas: ⁴⁷
 1. **Ethiopia:** The Jews of Ethiopia light their candles with something called tofe, a homemade Ethiopian beeswax candle, with a big flame. They also eating a dish called *doro wat* with injera on hanukkah.
 2. **India:** In India the Festival of Lights is referred to as “Jewish Hindu Dewali.” Indian Jews don’t light wax-covered candles – instead, they dip wicks in coconut oil. Instead of the latkes common in Ashkenazi culture, Hannukah in India often features barfi, a milk-based treat enhanced with sweet fruits. Onion pakoras, coconut milk curries and sweet flattened rice pancakes are customary delicacies for the holiday as celebrated by India's longstanding Jewish population
 3. **Cuba:** In their cooking, Cubans use plantains in much the same way Americans and Canadians use potatoes: mashing them, baking them, and frying them. It should not come as a surprise, then, that Cuban Jews make fried plantains, otherwise known as tostones or patacones, for their Hanukkah celebrations.
 4. **Syria:** The Jews of Aleppo were descendants of Sephardic Jews expelled from Spain in 1492. When they finally found a safe haven in Syria, they vowed to light an additional shamash (helper candle) on Hanukkah as a sign of thanks. Today’s Syria is a much different country. This Hanukkah, consider adopting the Syrian Jewish tradition of lighting an additional

⁴⁷ https://reformjudaism.org/jewish-holidays/hanukkah/holiday-travelogue-8-hanukkah-customs-around-world?utm_source=WU&utm_medium=email&utm_content=20191220&utm_campaign=Feature

Kehillot haOlam: Hanukkah

Lesson 5: Authentic Assessment

shamash in solidarity with the refugees who have fled Syria in search of shelter and peace.

5. **France:** In the wine-making region of Avignon in the south of France, it is customary to end the Shabbat that falls during Hanukkah by opening a new bottle or cask of wine. After Havdalah, Jews would travel around the neighborhood to various homes, tasting the wines and toasting the holiday.
6. **Mexico:** In Spanish, Hanukkah is known as Januca or Lucenarias – the feast of lights. Mexican children play a game called toma todo (winner takes all), which is similar to the version of dreidel that we play except the top has six sides instead of four. The toma toda dreidel is known as a pirinola. For a true multi-cultural experience, Mexican Jews often break a dreidel-shaped piñata filled with Hanukkah trinkets and treats.
7. **Italy:** On Tishah B'Av, we read the Book of Lamentations, often in complete darkness. There is an Italian custom of saving the candle that was used to help us read on Tishah B'Av to help us light the menorah during Hanukkah. On Tishah B'Av, we mourn the destruction of the Holy Temple; on Hanukkah, we celebrate its rededication. Using the same candle for both occasions connects the two events: On Tishah B'Av we are sad, but on Hanukkah we rejoice as we rekindle this same light as the shamash for our festival of freedom.
8. **Kurdistan:** Although Jews no longer live in Kurdistan, many Kurdish Jews still observe two unusual Hanukkah customs. The first is similar to the giving of Hanukkah gelt, but with a twist: a week before the holiday, children lock the doors to their rooms. Their parents must give them coins in order to gain entry. The second custom was developed by Jews too poor to afford a hanukkiah (Hanukkah menorah). They used eggshells as cups for wicks and oil, lighting the required number of cracked shells every night.
9. **Morocco:** Jews in Morocco extended the joy of Hanukkah into a ninth day, which became known as “the day of the shamash.” On that day, children would go from house to house, collecting leftover Hanukkah candles. Then, they would make a giant bonfire, dancing and singing around it, and jumping and leaping over it. It was believed that jumping over the fire could bring good luck. Single women would jump over the fire in the hopes of getting married. Married women struggling to conceive would jump over the fire in the hopes of being blessed with a child.

Family Research *

- Research your families Holiday practices around Hanukkah. Are there any that are unique to your family? If so, see if you can trace the origin of this custom and present it the rest of the class.

Kehillot haOlam: Hanukkah

Lesson 5: Authentic Assessment

Vision Board

- Using magazines, paper, scissors and glue, create a collage board that includes ideas learned throughout this lesson. This should somehow illustrate how you plan to bring these global Hannukah practices to life.

Blog Post

- Write a blog post that illustrates your three main takeaways from this unit. What did you learn and how has it impacted your Jewish identity? Do you plan to adjust your celebration of Hanukkah in any way?

Vlog

- Similar to the blog, record yourself discussing your three main takeaways from this unit. You could even bring in video clippings from previous lessons to better illustrate your learning.

Instagram Story

- Using your Instagram or a new Instagram account, document the variety of Hanukkah traditions that we have explored throughout this unit. This can be done as the lessons are taught and/or something larger at the end to summarize.

Song Playlist

- Create a playlist of Hanukkah music. This can be comprised of already existing Jewish music for Hannukah or secular songs that focus on Hanukkah themes. Publish the playlist somewhere (perhaps the synagogues website and/or social media page) so that others can enjoy these songs.

Organize a Service

- Inspired by ideas learned about Hanukkah around the world, create a Shabbat service for the synagogue that highlights unfamiliar details of global Hanukah practices. This could include various songs, texts and food for Oneg.

Interview

- Find someone who is of a different origin than you. Interview them about their family's history and any unique customs, traditions, or rituals associated with Hannukah within their family.

Kehillot haOlam: Hanukkah

Lesson 5: Authentic Assessment

Closure

Create a way for the students to all present their authentic assessments to one another. You can invite the students' families, clergy team, board members of the congregation, or keep it intimate with just the class. It could also be simply asking students to give an elevator pitch of the learning from the Authentic Assessment they created outside of class.

UNIT 5: **PURIM**

Kehillot haOlam: Purim

Lesson 1: Morocco

Goals

- To review the story of Purim.
- To practice ululating, the high-pitched sound that is common in Arabic cultures as a sign of great emotional intensity.
- To bake the symbolic Moroccan Bread often made on Purim, *Ojos de Haman*.
- To explore Hamanis in Moroccan Jewish culture.

Essential Questions

- How do Moroccan Jews celebrate Purim? How are their practices different from those of the students'?
- What is the significance of *Ojo de Haman* and *Hamanis* in Moroccan Jewish culture?
- Why do Moroccan Jews ululate instead of using a grogger on Purim?

Objectives (Students will be able to...)

- Compare and contrast their understanding of Purim with the ways in which Purim is celebrated in Morocco.
- Ululate in place of a grogger during the Purim Schpiel.
- Articulate the significance of *Ojos de Haman* bread and *Hamanis* in Moroccan Jewish culture.

Supplies:

- Computer with sound
- *Ojos de Haman* (serves 12)
 - 12 eggs, plus 1 beaten
 - 7 cups flour, divided (all purpose or bread flour)
 - 3/4 cup sugar
 - 3 tablespoons yeast
 - 2 1/2 cups warm water
 - 1/2 cup oil
 - 1 tablespoon salt
 - 2 tablespoons of anise seed, (fennel seeds)
- Candy
- Scary / "Haman" Pinata OR Large Sheet
- Bat
- String
- Blindfold

Other things to prepare

- Order Candy for Haman Pinata
 - <https://amzn.to/3awdjRt>

Kehillot haOlam: Purim

Lesson 1: Morocco

- (optional) Order Scary / “Haman” Pinata
 - <https://amzn.to/39sSg2c>
- Put candy in Pinata or large sheet.
- Hang pinata or large sheet from a pole or tree outside.
- Copies of *Appendix A: Purim Story*, 1 per student + 1 extra cut into strips by paragraph.
- Pre-load the following video onto a computer with good sound
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SxutN-R0glA>
- Copies of *Appendix B: Sephardic Purim Gifts of Food*, 1 per student.

Notes to the Educator

- While the *Ojos de Haman* dough is rising you will have an hour. One way to fill that hour is to invite a younger class to teach them about Moroccan Purim traditions. This may be a great opportunity for your teens to facilitate a pinata smashing of “Haman” to honor the Moroccan tradition mentioned in activity 3, for the younger students. If you choose to do this, make sure to communicate well in advanced so that the class you plan to bring in is available.

Kehillot haOlam: Purim

Lesson 1: Morocco

Set Induction

(10 minutes)

Begin by doing a quick review of Purim. Using the strips cut from *Appendix A: Purim Story*, ask the students to put the Purim story in order. This can be done as an entire class or in small groups.

Do not read the story out loud quite yet.

Activity 1: Ululate Lesson

(10 minutes)

Explain that you will be exploring the ways in which the Moroccan Jewish community celebrates Purim. One unique trait to Moroccan Purim is that they ululate instead of using a grogger during the Purim shpiel.

Ululation is a long, wavering, high-pitched vocal sound resembling a howl with a trilling quality. It is produced by emitting a high-pitched loud voice accompanied with a rapid back and forth movement of the tongue and the uvula.

Ululation is commonly practiced in most of Africa, the Middle East, Central-to-South Asia, and in the Indian state's Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Bengal, Odisha, and Sri Lanka. It is also practiced in a few places in Europe, like Cyprus, and among the diaspora community originating from these areas. Ululation also occurs among Mizrahi Jews at all joyous occasions such as at the inauguration of a Torah scroll (hachnasat sefer Torah), *brit milah* (circumcision), communal celebrations, weddings, bar mitzvah celebrations, and most of all at henna celebrations. ⁴⁸

Watch the following video as a class: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SxutN-RogIA>. Then, ask each student to practice their own version of Ululation in preparation for the Purim Shpiel.

If you are interested in watching an Ululation Lesson, check it out [here](#). ⁴⁹

Activity 2: Purim Shpiel

(15 minutes)

Have a student read the Purim story from *Appendix A: Purim Story*. This can also be acted out with assigned characters if you choose to do so. Every time “Haman” is mentioned, the class should practice Ululating like they do in the Moroccan Jewish community.

🧐 What do we learn from the story of Purim?

⁴⁸ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ululation>

⁴⁹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pfdqN2PaAec&t=271s>

Kehillot haOlam: Purim

Lesson 1: Morocco

- Ⓔ How did it feel to ululate when “Haman” is said, compared to using a grogger? Which do you prefer and why?

Activity 2: Ojos de Haman

(45 minutes)

Pass out copies of *Appendix B: Sephardic Purim Gifts of Food* to each student. Read the article together as a class and then make the Ojos de Haman together as a class.

The article provided lists other Purim dishes from around the world that you are encouraged to explore as well.

Activity 3: Hamanis

(45 minutes)

While the dough from the *Ojos de Haman* is rising, explore the idea of *Hamanis*.

In Morocco, it is traditional for Jewish children to fill up a kaftan (similar to a Mexican piñata) with *Hamanis* (traditional Moroccan Purim candies). The children hang the kaftan from a pole and then they beat it with bats so that the *hamanis* can fall down for all of the children to eat.

Invite a younger grade to your class. Have your teens explain what they are learning about this year and allow them to teach the younger kids what they’ve learned about Purim traditions in Morocco. Then, with the younger kids, help the teens facilitate a pinata smashing to honor this unique Moroccan tradition.

Then, continue making the *Ojos de Haman* with or without the younger kids.

Closure

(5 minutes)

This closure could be done as the students are enjoying their *Ojos de Haman*.

- Ⓔ Why is it important to honor dishes that have been passed down from generation to generation?
- Ⓔ Do you have any dishes in your family that have been passed down from generation to generation?

PURIM STORY

A very long time ago a King named Ahashverosh had chosen the city of Shushan to be the capital of his Kingdom. To celebrate, he had a tremendous celebration and feast for all the important people in the kingdom. The drunken King began to brag that his wife Vashti was the most beautiful woman in the land. On the last day of the feast, he commanded her to come and dance before the crowd. But Queen Vashti was too good for that, and she refused to appear. This made the King angry, and he banished her from his kingdom.

Ahashverosh now needed a new queen and he wanted someone even more beautiful than Vashti. Many women were brought before him so he could choose his bride.

In Shushan, a Jewish woman by the name of Esther lived with her Uncle Mordechai. Mordechai encouraged her to go before the King and try to become Queen. But he told her to keep her Jewish identity a secret. Esther was kind and gentle and extremely beautiful. As soon as the King saw her, he made her his new Queen.

One day Mordechai went to visit Esther outside the palace. He happened to hear two guards plotting to kill the King. He reported this, and the men were caught and killed. Although Mordechai's great deed was recorded in the royal record book, the King was never informed that Mordechai had saved his life.

Soon after, Ahashverosh appointed Haman, a man who wore a hat with three corners, as his new prime minister. All the King's subjects were ordered to honor Haman and to bow down to him. Everyone did, except for Mordechai. Mordechai was a Jew, and Jews only bow down to God.

Haman was furious about this. He went straight to the King to complain. "There is a group of people," he said, "scattered throughout your kingdom, who are different from us. They don't obey your laws, and they don't worship our gods. If you give me permission, I will destroy them for you."

Ahashverosh gave Haman his royal ring in order to make this new order official. Haman wanted to execute his plan on the correct day, on a lucky day blessed by his gods and the stars. He cast lots (like a raffle, or in Hebrew, *Purim*) to choose the day. The day chosen for killing all the Jews was the 13th day of the month of Adar.

When Mordechai heard of this new order, he told Esther that she must go to the King to try and save the Jews. Esther was afraid, but Mordechai said, "Who knows? Perhaps you have been put in the palace for this very purpose. If you do nothing, what will happen to us?"

Purim Lesson 1: Morocco

Appendix A

Esther asked that the Jews in Shushan fast and pray for her for three days. When the three days of prayers and fasting had ended, Esther went to the King. The King welcomed her and asked “What is your request, my Queen? Half of my kingdom is yours for the asking!” Esther then asked only that the King and Haman come to a private banquet that she was preparing.

At the banquet the King could tell that something was wrong, and he asked again, “What is your wish? Whatever you want is yours!” But Esther only invited the King and Haman to a second party.

That night, the King could not sleep. He tossed and turned and finally called for his servant to bring out the record book, so that he could read himself to sleep. The servant read the story of how Mordechai had warned of the plot against the King and had saved the King’s life.

King Ahashverosh asked “What reward did the Jew receive? “None, sir,” was the reply. “He saved my life, and he received no reward?!” stormed the King. The King later asked Haman, “what should be done for a man the King wishes to honor?”

“He must be referring to me,” thought Haman gleefully. “I know just the thing,” he said. “Let him wear the King’s royal robes and crown and ride the King’s royal horse. Have a servant walk before the horse and cry out: ‘Thus shall be done to the man whom the King wishes to honor!’”

“Wonderful idea!” cried Ahashverosh. “I shall leave it all to you. Find Mordechai the Jew and do exactly as you have described, down to the last detail!”

Haman could not believe it, but he did as he was commanded, and Mordechai was led with royal honor through the streets of Shushan. Haman returned home a bitter man. Still, he had to be at the royal palace in time for Queen Esther’s second banquet.

After the feast the King asked, “What is it you desire, Esther? Why have you invited us here? Speak and it shall be done!” Now Esther spoke. “Spare my life,” she cried, “and the lives of my people. We have been sentenced to death!”

“Who would do such a thing?” asked the surprised King. “An evil and wicked man, your minister Haman!” Esther called out. “What?!” exclaimed the King. “Do you dare to attack the Queen in my palace? Take Haman away and hang him!” he shouted. The King then made Mordechai his Minister, and the Jews were saved!

Sephardic Purim Gifts of Food ⁵⁰
By Sharon Gomperts and Rachel Emquies Sheff

For our grandmothers, Purim didn't mean matching mishloach manot to the theme of the family Purim costumes. Or a basket filled with Israeli wafers, chocolates and candy, mini bottles of grape juice and the ubiquitous grogger all wrapped in cellophane and tied with a big, plastic bow.

For our grandmothers, Purim meant baking recipes handed down through generations. The rabbinic dictum to give gifts of food (mishloach manot) to friends and family, meant that across the Middle East and Mediterranean, our grandmothers would spend days baking sweet and savory delicacies.

What better way to honor the joy of Purim and remember that we were saved from the decree to kill all the Jews than to bake yummy treats that evoke the defeat of Haman? Purim has a special resonance for Persian Jews, who bake a rose-water flavored cookie sprinkled with poppy seeds or sesame seeds to represent Haman's fleas. They also make a flour-based halvah flavored with cardamom, saffron and rosewater.

Bulgarian Jews serve a lemon vermicelli pasta dish to represent Haman's hair. The Rhodesli Jews have the Ladino tradition of baking biscochos, bourekas and fulares, a bread-based roll holding a hardboiled egg with crisscross strips of dough over the egg representing either the caged Haman or the hanging of Haman.

The Jewish communities of North Africa make a sweet fried dough called *fijeulas* dipped in a honey syrup, and a special Purim bread roll, similar to fulares, with a whole egg cradled in the bread, called ***Ojos de Haman (eyes of Haman)***, with two strips of dough on top forming an X. Rachel grew up eating these as a child in Casablanca. Today, she makes them for family and friends.

The Jews of Babylon baked many treats for Purim. Sharon's grandmother was renowned for her delicious Ba'ba Ta'Mar, a savory, crispy, yeast cookie with a soft, creamy, date filling. Other Iraqi treats included baklava, almond macaroons and malfouf, rosewater flavored almond cigars made from filo pastry. The family also made sambusak — baked dough pockets filled with cheese — and fried dough pockets filled with spiced chickpeas.

⁵⁰ <https://jewishjournal.com/culture/food/311661/sephardic-purim-gifts-of-food/>

Ojos de Haman (North African Purim Bread)

Serves 12

Ingredients

- 12 eggs, plus 1 beaten
- 7 cups flour, divided (all purpose or bread flour)
- 3/4 cup sugar
- 3 tablespoons yeast
- 2 1/2 cups warm water
- 1/2 cup oil
- 1 tablespoon salt
- 2 tablespoons of anise seed, (fennel seeds)



Directions

1. Boil 12 eggs, discard water and set aside. Peel when cool and dry.
2. In large bowl, mix 2 cups flour, sugar, yeast and water and let sit 5 to 10 minutes until frothy.
3. When mix is frothy, add 5 cups flour, oil, salt and fennel seeds in bowl of Kitchen Aid or knead by hand. Cover with plastic and a dish towel and let rise for one hour.
4. Beat one egg for egg wash.
5. Preheat oven to 350 F.
6. Punch down and divide dough, separating it into equal-sized balls the size of your palm. Take a ball, flatten and cut into strips that will hold egg in place.
7. Using a finger, poke hole in the center of dough ball as if making a doughnut, place egg in center and place on baking sheet.
8. Fold two strips of dough into an “X” atop egg. Use beaten egg as glue to secure strips. If they slide, hold in place with toothpicks.
9. With a knife or scissors, cut around edge of bun on each side and pinch together to form a flower or sun. Brush top with egg wash.
10. Bake for 20-25 minutes.
11. Optional: For dark crust, mix one egg with one yolk and 1 tablespoon honey.
12. Enjoy!

Kehillot haOlam: Purim

Lesson 2: Yemen and Baghdad

Goals

- To review the story of Purim.
- To understand the ways in which Haman was disgraced in Yemenite and Baghdadi culture.
- To explore Haman as a whole person through the significance of his 10 sons.
- To make a connection to modern day “Haman’s” in our lives.

Essential Questions

- How do Yemenite and Baghdadi Jews celebrate Purim?
- How are Yemenite and Baghdadi practices around Purim different from those of the student’s?
- What are the “Haman’s” in our lives today?

Objectives (*Students will be able to...*)

- Compare and contrast their understanding of Purim with the ways in which Purim is celebrated in Yemen and Baghdad.
- Explain how Haman and Hitler are connected.
- Articulate the “Haman’s” in their lives.

Supplies

- Temper paints – mixed colors
- Balloons
- Tarp
- Darts
- Butcher paper – 2-3 feet per student OR 1 large white poster board per student
- Push pens
- Black Sharpie’s
- Funnel
- Computer paper
- Pens
- Washable markers
- 2 large bowls of water

Other things to prepare

- Find an area of the synagogue that is able to get messy (most likely outside)
- Pin a tarp to cover a large space at least 15 feet long and 15 feet wide.
- Securely pin the butcher paper or posters into the tarp around eye level.
- Using the funnel, put about 1 cup of paint in 20 balloons, use a mix of colors

Kehillot haOlam: Purim

Lesson 2: Yemen and Baghdad

- Write each of Haman's son's name on the balloons (twice)
 - *Parmashta*
 - *Parshandatha*
 - *Vaizatha*
 - *Aridai*
 - *Aridatha*
 - *Poratha*
 - *Adalia*
 - *Aspatha*
 - *Arisai*
 - *Dalphon*
- Secure the paint filled balloons onto the butcher paper so that when the darts are thrown at them, the paint will go onto the paper.
- Fill a large bowl with water

Kehillot haOlam: Purim

Lesson 2: Yemen and Baghdad

Set Induction

(5 minutes)

Last week the students began to explore the ways in which Jewish communities made Haman into an effigy that is then destroyed. An effigy is a roughly made model of a particular person, made in order to be damaged or destroyed as a protest or expression of anger. Take a moment to reflect on how that felt.

- 🕒 How did it feel to be smashing something that was supposed to resemble Haman?
- 🕒 Did it matter that Haman was a bad man who wanted to kill the Jews?
- 🕒 How is this different from “booing” when Haman’s name is said? Which is worse?

Activity 1: Who was Haman?

(20 minutes)

Use this opportunity to take a step back and explore more about who Haman really was.

Haman was Mordechai’s Slave The Book of Esther describes that Mordechai refused to kneel or pay Haman any honor. Haman’s malice towards Mordechai increased to murderous levels for his refusal to acknowledge his high position. There is a good reason for that too. Mordechai and Haman go many years back (not mentioned in the Book of Esther). One opinion explains that Haman and Mordechai both had a royal task to resolve in Jerusalem. So, they both left in two separate parties. Mordechai never trusted Haman and figured he’s be up to no good. At some point on the trip, Haman’s party ran out of food and water and had to ask Mordechai to share with them food. To keep Haman in check, Mordechai agreed in return for Haman to become his slave. A different opinion says that they were both military generals that led two separate military units. Haman’s unit fell short of food in this story as well. In this story too Mordechai agreed under the condition that Haman becomes his slave. Given Mordechai used to be Haman’s master and was also a G-d fearing pious man, he refused to kneel to the Haman the Agagite and evil descendant of Amalek. Hence the great animosity we learn in the Megillah. ⁵¹

Take a moment to watch [this](#) ⁵² video about Haman’s connection to Hitler. Then ask the group the following questions:

- 🕒 What did you find most interesting about this video?
- 🕒 What is Hitler’s connection to Haman?
- 🕒 How is Haman related to Mordechai?
- 🕒 How are Haman’s sons significant to the Purim story?
- 🕒 What was Esther’s role in Haman’s fate?

⁵¹ <https://www.talknsave.net/blog/religion/jewish/10-things-you-never-knew-about-haman/>

⁵² https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=344&v=gzaJZObGeos&feature=emb_logo

Kehillot haOlam: Purim

Lesson 2: Yemen and Baghdad

Activity 2: Haman's 10 Sons

(45 minutes)

Haman's 10 sons were known to have been co-conspirators in Haman's plot to kill the Jews. Yemenite Jews would commemorate this by writing each of the sons' names on a cactus leaf and hanging them on a wall. They would then throw darts at them so that they would leak milky juice to resemble the tears of Haman begging for forgiveness.

To commemorate this in a more positive way, we are going to throw darts at balloons filled with paint. Each of these balloons has the name of one of Haman's son. When all of the balloons have been popped, we will turn it into a beautiful piece of art for the synagogue.

Take the students outside to throw darts and the balloons. Allow some time for the butcher paper or poster boards to dry. You can either cut the butcher paper into pieces so that each student has one or keep the butcher paper as one long piece to go somewhere for the rest of the synagogue to see.

As the paint is drying, instruct the students to think about what courage, one of the main themes of the Purim story, means to them. Give them some computer paper to practice an image, poem, or journal entry that will be written or drawn onto their posters with black sharpie when it is dry. This is to commemorate the courage it took Esther to stand up to Haman during the Purim story.

Activity 3: Bye Bye Haman

(10 minutes)

This activity can also be done as the paint is drying from activity 2.

In Baghdad, Jews would write "Haman" on a piece of paper and then erase it with wine. Now we are going to do that by taking it a step further.

Hand each student a piece of computer paper and a washable marker,

On this piece of paper they should write "Haman" in the middle. Around Haman's name, they write should all of the things that they would consider as their "Haman's of today." Some examples include but are not limited to:

- Stress / anxiety
- Homework
- Social media addiction
- Global warming
- Illness
- Drama with friends

Encourage them to write as many things as possible. Then, one a time they should dip their piece of paper in the water. If they use washable markers, the marker should wash off in the water. In the end, this serves as a sort of "tashlich" for the bad things in their lives.

Kehillot haOlam: Purim

Lesson 2: Yemen and Baghdad

Closure

(5 minutes)

Once everyone has dipped their “Haman’s” in the water, bring the group back for a quick reflection.

- ⌚ Was it easy or hard to come up with your “Haman’s of Today”? Why?
- ⌚ How did it feel to wash away your Haman’s?
- ⌚ Is this something you could see doing again to relieve stress or worry? How? In what context?

Kehillot haOlam: Purim

Lesson 3: The Great Purim Bake Off

Goals

- To review the story of Purim and the significance of Hamantaschen.
- To broaden the students' understanding of Purim cookies from around the world.
- To bake and taste Purim cookies from around the world: Lebanon/Syrian "Ma'amoul," Indian "Puran Poli," and Iraqi "Hadgi Badah."

Essential Questions

- Why don't all Jewish communities eat Hamantaschen on Purim?
- What are the similarities and differences between Hamantaschen and Lebanon/Syrian "Ma'amoul," Indian "Puran Poli," and Iraqi "Hadgi Badah."

Objectives (Students will be able to...)

- Compare and contrast their understanding of Hamantaschen to Lebanon/Syrian "Ma'amoul," Indian "Puran Poli," and Iraqi "Hadgi Badah."
- Explain how these foods came to be recognized as part of the Indian-Jewish, Iraqi-Jewish, Lebanese-Jewish and Syrian-Jewish cultures.
- Suggest a possible connection between food, tradition, and customs.

Supplies

- *Ma'amoul Date Cookies*
 - 1/2 tsp active dry yeast
 - 1/4 cup lukewarm water
 - 1 stick unsalted butter, melted and cooled to lukewarm
 - 1 1/2 cups coarse semolina (a coarse grind, like polenta, not fine semolina flour)
 - 1 Tbsp orange flower water
 - 1 large egg
 - 2 Tbsp sugar
 - 1/4 tsp salt
 - 1 cup all-purpose flour
 - Milk for brushing
 - 3/4 cup honey dates
 - 3 Tbsp sugar
 - 1 1/2 tsp orange flower water
 - 1 1/2 tsp rose water
- *Puran Poli - Makes about 16 pieces*
 - 2 cups All-purpose flour
 - 1 tsp baking powder
 - 1 stick butter (8 Tbsps) cut into pieces
 - 1 cup sugar
 - 1/4 tsp powdered cardamom
 - 1 pinch of salt
 - 1/4 - 1/2 cup 2% milk
 - 1 cup well-cooked split chickpeas, mashed
 - 1/2 cup coconut palm sugar (or regular brown sugar)
 - 1/4 tsp powdered cardamom
 - 1/2 cup coarsely crushed sliced almonds

Kehillot haOlam: Purim

Lesson 3: The Great Purim Bake Off

- *Hagdi Badah*
 - 2 ¼ cups all-purpose flour
 - 1 tsp ground cardamom
 - ½ tsp salt
 - ¼ tsp double-acting baking powder
 - 1 ⅓ cups sugar
 - 4 large eggs
 - 2 cups ground blanched almonds
 - Rose water or orange blossom water for moistening hands (optional)
 - About 48 whole blanched almonds or pistachios (optional)
- Mixing bowls
- Mixing spoons
- Baking sheets
- Measuring spoons
- Food processor
- Plastic wrap
- Foil
- Rolling pins
- Parchment paper
- 3-inch round cookie cutter

Other things to prepare

- Copies of *Appendix A: World of Mouth: A homemade Purim treat*, 1 per student
- Copies of *Appendix B: Lebanon/Syrian “Ma’amoul,” Indian “Puran Poli,” and Iraqi “Hadgi Badah”*, 1 per student.

Kehillot haOlam: Purim

Lesson 3: The Great Purim Bake Off

Set Induction

(5 minutes)

Remind students why we eat Hamantaschen on Purim. Answers include but are not limited to:

- The triangle cookie resembles Haman's hat
- The triangle cookie resembles Haman's ears
- In German, *Mohn* means poppyseed and *Taschen* means pockets. There is a connection to Haman's pockets.

For more about the history of Hamantaschen, check out [this](#) link. ⁵³

Ask students to list as many fillings as they can think of that can go in Hamantaschen. Write the list on the board.

Activity 1: The Diversity of Purim Treats

(15 minutes)

Explain to the students that not all Jews eat Hamantaschen on Purim. Many communities have other cookies eaten during this festive time. While some are similar to Hamantaschen, they are also distinct in their own ways.

Pass out copies of *Appendix A: World of Mouth: A homemade Purim Treat* to each student. Read it together as a class.

Activity 2: The Great Purim Bake Off

(60 minutes)

This activity can be done individually, with the class broken up into groups, or some combination of both.

Pass out copies of *Appendix B: Lebanon/Syrian "Ma'amoul," Indian "Puran Poli," and Iraqi "Hadgi Badah."* In this appendix you will see the instructions to make each of these dishes, along with a story that goes along with it.

If you choose to teach these individually, you will read/discuss the article as a class, cook the item connected to it, and then go on to the next article and food. Use the cooking time to ask the discussion questions. If you choose to break the class into three groups, they will each read the article, cook the food associated with it, discuss the questions as a group, and then present the article and food to the rest of the class.

⁵³ https://www.chabad.org/holidays/purim/article_cdo/aid/2872815/jewish/The-History-and-Meaning-of-Hamantaschen.htm

Kehillot haOlam: Purim

Lesson 3: The Great Purim Bake Off

Activity 3 or Closure

(10 minutes)

As either activity 3 or as the closure, use this opportunity to reflect on the dishes they made and how they relate to global Judaism.

Discussion questions for “Ma’amoul” :

- 🕒 Where does this dish originate?
- 🕒 How are *Ma’amoul* similar to and different from Hamantaschen?
- 🕒 In what other contexts are *Ma’amoul* eaten?

Discussion questions for “Puran Poli”:

- 🕒 Where does this dish originate?
- 🕒 How are *Puran Poli* similar to and different from Hamantaschen?
- 🕒 How are *Puran Poli* related to the Hindu holiday of Holi?
- 🕒 How is the Hindu Holiday of Holi similar to Purim?

Discussion Questions for “Hadgi Badah”:

- 🕒 Where does this dish originate?
- 🕒 How are *Hadgi Badah* similar to and different from Hamantaschen?
- 🕒 Why are *Hadgi Badah* so significant in Ayelet’s family?

World of Mouth: A homemade Purim Treat ⁵⁴

By Johanna Bailey

Everyone knows that food plays an integral role in the Purim celebrations. Although there are certain dishes that are eaten by many Jews around the world, other popular Purim foods can vary widely based on the cultural background of the celebrants. Nevertheless, despite the differences, the underlying symbolism of many of these dishes remains the same.

Probably the most well-known food associated with Purim are Hamentaschen, Haman's pocket/ear/hat shaped cookies that are often filled with poppy seeds, nuts, fruits or chocolate. Amongst Sephardic Jews, however, deep-fried strips of dough called "*Orejas de Haman*" (Haman's ears) are often the primary Purim treats, while with some Western European and Scandinavian Jews, it is traditional to bake and eat gingerbread men in the shape of Haman. As we can see, despite the differences in the anatomical details, there is definitely a pattern of "eat and erase the villain" behavior in Purim foods around the world!

Another typical feature of Purim foods is the idea of having a hidden filling, a reference to the notion that there are many secrets and surprises in the story of Purim. In Ashkenazie culinary tradition, it is customary to eat Kreplach (a meat or potato filled dumpling), pirogen, stuffed cabbage, or knishes. Italian Jews often celebrate Purim with spinach-filled pasta and "buricche," puff pastry turnovers filled with vegetables or meat; while Persian and Iraqi Jews eat "sambusak," turnovers filled with savory ingredients such as ground lamb, cheese, chickpeas, chicken or spinach.

Because Esther supposedly kept to a strict vegetarian diet while in Haman's palace, Jewish communities around the world eat foods containing nuts and seeds at Purim. Many Iraqi Jews eat "Hadgi Badah," sugar cookies with cardamom and almonds. Another Middle Eastern Purim favorite, especially in Lebanon and Syria, are mamoul, semolina cookies filled with nuts or dates.

Traditionally mamoul cookies are made using decorative wooden molds, but they are easy to shape by hand as well. Israeli food blogger Chanita Harel decided to try her hand at mamoul cookies and was thrilled with the results, saying that they were "not too sweet and very easy to make."

⁵⁴ <https://www.jpost.com/Food-Index/World-of-Mouth-A-homemade-Purim-treat>

Easy Ma'amoul: A Middle Eastern Jewish Dessert ⁵⁵

By Shlomo Schwartz

Ma'amoul is a traditional small pastry from the Levant (the area between Syria in the north and Egypt in the south including Lebanon, Israel and Palestine). Muslims, Christians and Jews lived in this area, alongside each other for over 1500 years. Among the many cultural and culinary traditions they share are the date and walnut-stuffed cookies called Ma'amoul.

For many, this Middle Eastern treat is a sweet bite of nostalgia, as the cookies are associated with certain holidays and special occasions. Muslims eat them to break the fast during the month of Ramadan and Eid al-Fitr, Christians nibble on them before the Lent and while celebrating Easter, and Jews enjoy them during Purim, when they're filled with nuts, and Rosh Hashanah, when they're filled with dates.

You can find many types of Ma'amoul around the region, with different names, fillings and shapes. In Lebanon, you can find seven kinds of this pastry! Traditional Ma'amoul is round and formed into unique shapes using hand carved wooden molds or by using special decorating tweezers that form different pattern. Jewish ma'amoul stands out in that it's made with pure white flour instead of semolina.

Forming each cookie individually is a labor of love, so you can take a shortcut with my recipe for "Lazy Ma'amoul" if you're short on time. It tastes just as good as the original. In the spirit of the variety of fillings for Ma'amoul, I added crumbled Halvah and chopped pecans to the traditional date filling.

⁵⁵ <https://www.myjewishlearning.com/the-nosher/easy-maamoul-a-middle-eastern-jewish-dessert/>

Ma'amoul Date Cookies

Ingredients for the cookies

- 1/2 teaspoon active dry yeast
- 1/4 cup lukewarm water
- 1 stick unsalted butter, melted and cooled to lukewarm
- 1 1/2 cups coarse semolina (a coarse grind, like polenta, not fine semolina flour)
- 1 tablespoon orange flower water
- 1 large egg
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- Milk for brushing

Ingredients for the filling

- 3/4 cup honey dates
- 3 tablespoons sugar
- 1 1/2 teaspoons orange flower water
- 1 1/2 teaspoons rose water

Directions

1. In a large bowl, dissolve the yeast in the water. Add the orange flower water, egg, and melted butter. Stir.
2. Stir in the semolina and then sprinkle on the sugar and salt and stir.
3. Add the flour and stir to combine. The mixture should be crumbly but hold together when squeezed. Cover with plastic wrap and let rest for 1 hour.
4. Place all the ingredients in a food processor and process to a paste. Transfer to a bowl and set aside, covered.
5. Place a rack in the center of the oven and preheat the oven to 350°F (175°C). Set out an 18-by-12-inch baking sheet near your work surface.
6. To shape the ma'amoul without a mold, use a tablespoon to scoop up a full level tablespoon of dough and then use your hands to flatten it into a nearly 3-inch-diameter round. Scoop up 1 1/2 teaspoons of the filling and place it on the center of the round. Pull the edges up to cover the filling, then roll the cookie lightly between your palms to make a ball. Place seam side down on the baking sheet. Repeat with the remaining dough and filling, placing the cookies about 1/2-inch apart. Prick each cookie decoratively with a fork. Brush the tops with a little milk.
7. If you are using a carved mold to shape the cookies, oil the inside of the mold with a bit of olive oil and then fill it so it is almost full of dough, using your fingers to press the dough into the mold to make a hollow. Then place the filling in the hollow and wrap the dough around the filling before removing from the mold. Remember to re-oil the molds every 3 or 4 cookies.
8. Bake cookies until they are golden brown at the edges, 20 to 25 minutes. Transfer immediately to a wire rack to cool.



Puran Poli: Good Defeats Evil Time Again ⁵⁶

Here are two tales from a long time ago, about how goodness prevails and striking parallels about how the antagonists meet their fate at the hands of divinity. The first one is from the book of Esther, the story of Haman the evil.

Haman was the vizier in the ancient empire of Persia at the court of Xerxes I. He plots to poison the king's mind, hatches a diabolical plot to exterminate Mordechai (a confidant of the king and an uncle of Xerxes' queen Esther) and other Jews who lived in Persia and in his arrogance, even builds gallows from which to hang Mordechai. His plans are foiled by queen Esther and Haman finds himself at the end of the noose he created for Mordechai. This deliverance from the evil Haman is commemorated by the Jewish holiday Purim.

The second story, from the Puranas is that of Holika, the demoness. Holika was the sister of the Asura Hiranyakashipu. Their familial hatred of Vishnu was legendary and when Kamsa, the lord of Mathura seeks her help in finding and destroying the infant Krishna (an avatar of Lord Vishnu), she eagerly accepts the challenge. Holika had the divine gift of being immune to fire and thus tries to immolate herself along with the infant. But alas, the scheme fails and the evil Holika gets incinerated.

Two tales, from two different religions, the striking similarity is that the antagonists each get finished off by the very tools they tried to use against their targets. Today, these festivals are even commemorated in similar ways via bonfires (this tradition seems to have existed as recently as the 1950s in certain remote parts of Iran & Kurdistan). The foods that mark these events are the triangular Hammentashens, (the shape is supposed to represent Haman's triangular hat) and the Puran Poli, a stuffed sweet griddle bread that is made for the festival of Holi in western India. Both these recipes consist of a stuffing enclosed by a dough covering.

The similarities were so striking from the parables down to the celebratory pastries that I had to give this idea a serious try, and it was a splendid success on my second try. The shell is an eggless version of that used in the traditional Hammentashen, while the filling is that used in the Indian Puran poli. I also used some Jack fruit Pate as an another filling variation.

I'm not sure what to call it, so am leaving the naming of this to you, my readers... Purim Poli or Holi-tashen?

⁵⁶ <https://www.panfusine.com/2014/03/good-defeats-evil-time-again.html>

Purim Lesson 3: The Great Purim Bake Off

Appendix B

Puran Poli (Makes about 16 pieces)

Ingredients for the dough:

- 2 cups All-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 stick butter (8 Tbsps.) cut into pieces
- 1 cup sugar
- 1/4 teaspoon powdered cardamom
- 1 pinch of salt
- 1/4 - 1/2 cup 2% milk



Ingredients of the filling:

- 1 cup well-cooked split chickpeas (Chana dal), mashed
- 1/2 cup coconut palm sugar (or regular brown sugar)
- 1/4 teaspoon powdered cardamom
- 1/2 cup coarsely crushed sliced almonds

Directions

1. Combine and sift the all-purpose flour, baking powder, salt and cardamom. Whisk the butter and sugar until fluffy using a stand or hand mixture.
2. Gradually add the flour mixture alternating with the milk until the ingredients come together. You do not have to use up all the milk. Knead the dough gently into a smooth ball. Shape into a disk and wrap with plastic film. Place in refrigerator for at least an hour until the dough is firm.
3. Combine the ingredients for the filling together and cook on low fire until the sugar melts and the mix thickens to a point where you can shape the filling without crumbling. If it gets too dry, add a tablespoon of milk.
4. Preheat oven to 375 F and line two baking trays with parchment paper.
5. Cut the disk of dough into two and place one half between two pieces of cling wrap.
6. Roll the dough to approximately 1/4-inch thickness. Using a 3-inch diameter cookie cutter cut out circles. Carefully peel off the extra dough to be re used for the next batch. Place a teaspoon of filling in the center and bring the edges together and pinch the dough at the apices of the triangle. Use a drop of water to ensure that the edges are firmly sealed.
7. Place the pastries on the lined baking trays and place in the oven. After a minute, you might notice the dough beginning to unfurl. If this happens remove the tray from the oven and reseal the pastries.
8. Bake for a total of 13 - 15 minutes.
9. Remove the *Puran Poli* from the oven and allow them to cool completely before eating.
10. Enjoy!

Purim Lesson 3: The Great Purim Bake Off

Appendix B

An Iraqi Purim Tradition Lives On — Courtesy of a Granddaughter ⁵⁷

By Ayelet Izraeli

When Ilana Itzhak was 9-years-old, her family fled Baghdad for Israel in the middle of the night. It was her mother, Marcel Batzri's idea. "I don't know how she persuaded my father," she says. They were already a family of four children and Marcel was pregnant. It was a journey filled with uncertainty. But, to Ilana, the two month voyage to Israel, which involved a boat, walking through an orchard, a bus, a train, staying with relatives in Iran, and finally a flight to Israel, felt like vacation. "It was very exciting and interesting. We didn't understand the danger," she says.

Once they arrived in Israel in 1950, two years after the founding of the state, "they tried to cling to things in the past whenever they could," Ilana explains. That included the tradition of a large Purim party. In Baghdad, her family home was the center of the celebration. Preparations would start weeks before with cousins and other family members coming by to help make Iraqi treats like date filled b'ebe b'tamer, ring-shaped cookies called k'aakat, savory cheese sambusak, and coconut-based hadgi badah. On the holiday, the entire extended family gathered to eat, sip tea, and play card games — with a table for the adults and another for the children.



From left to right: Marcel, Nur (Marcel's sister) and Hana (Marcel's sister-in-law) - Baghdad, 1947

In Israel, "my mother saw to it, that the custom wasn't lost," Ilana says. "Even before we had a house to live in, when we were in an immigrant camp," the family's Purim party continued.

"For us [as Iraqi Jews] the main tradition was Purim," her granddaughter Ayelet Izraeli and Ilana's niece explained, comparing the holiday to the way Ashkenazi families celebrate Hanukkah. She and her siblings were given pocket money to play the card game Dosa, which she explains is "like war with a dealer and you bet on the cards." The grandchildren were also sent home with mishloach manot, or edible gifts for the holiday, a mix of what Marcel had made and Iraqi sweets she purchased.

Over the years, the party went unchanged (but for the costumes, Ayelet jokes). Always the same pastries, oranges and tea, the same games, and the same circular wooden table top, made for the family by a carpenter in Jerusalem that was tucked under Marcel's bed for most of the year. She hosted the party until she died in her mid-90s in 2010.

Marcel never wrote down her recipes. Fortunately, Ayelet, who studied pastry, was able to capture them. "She had the recipes in her head, and I had to fish them out," she says. Since her grandmother passed away, she and her sister are the ones who make the Purim pastries, leaning on their mother to host, setting out the wooden table top she inherited from Marcel.

"I make everything and [my mom] tries to motivate everyone to come," Ayelet explains. "We're trying to keep it going."

⁵⁷ <https://www.jewishfoodsociety.org/posts/2018/2/22/an-iraqi-purim-tradition-lives-on-courtesy-of-a-granddaughter>

Hagdi Badah ⁵⁸
From Gil Mark's Encyclopedia of Jewish Food

Ingredients

- 2 ¼ cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon ground cardamom
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon double-acting baking powder
- 1 ⅓ cups sugar
- 4 large eggs
- 2 cups ground blanched almonds
- Rose water or orange blossom water for moistening hands (optional)
- About 48 whole blanched almonds or pistachios (optional)



Directions

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Line two large baking sheets with parchment paper or grease the baking sheets.
2. In a small bowl, shift together the flour, cardamom, salt and baking powder. In a large bowl, beat together the sugar and eggs until light and creamy, about 2 to 3 minutes. Stir in the flour mixture, then the ground almonds.
3. Moisten your hands with rose water or orange blossom water, if desired, and form the dough into 1-inch ball (I used a tablespoon to scoop the dough out of the bowl so they would be even in size).
4. Place on the prepared baking sheets and flatten slightly. If using, press a whole almond or pistachio into the center of each cookie.
5. Bake until lightly browned, about 10-12 minutes. Let the cookies stand until firm, about 1 minute, then transfer to a wire rack and let cook completely. Store in an airtight container at room temperature for up to 1 week or in the freezer for up to 6 months.

⁵⁸ <https://jwa.org/blog/eating-jewish-iraqi-purim-delicacies>

Kehillot haOlam: Purim

Lesson 4: Mexican Saint Esther

Goals

- To review the story of Purim.
- To delve deeper into Esther as a whole person in the Purim Story.
- To explore the history of Saint Esther within the crypto-Jewish community.

Essential Questions

- Why did Esther hide her identity?
- Who were the crypto-Jews and how did they hide their Judaism for centuries?
- What does it mean to hide one's identity? What are the consequences?

Objectives (*Students will be able to...*)

- Identify a moment where they hid their identity like Esther.
- Articulate the significance of Saint Esther to the crypto-Jews.
- Create their own Saint inspired by Saint Esther.

Supplies

- Tape
- Paper
- Markers

Other things to prepare

- Copies of *Appendix A: Esther's Secret Identity*, 1 per student.
- Copies of *Appendix B: Queen Esther: Patron saint of crypto-Jews*, 1 per student.
- 1 Copy of *Appendix C: Saint Esther Gallery*, printed in color.

Kehillot haOlam: Purim

Lesson 4: Mexican Saint Esther

Set Induction

(5 minutes)

Queen Esther is viewed as the hero of the Purim story. Review Esther's significance during Purim and then ask the students to list as many adjectives as they can to describe her. Examples include but are not limited to:

- Bold
- Courageous
- Brave
- Smart
- Modest

Activity 1: Hidden Story of Queen Esther

(15 minutes)

There is a lot that is known about Queen Esther that is rarely discussed during Purim.

Take a moment to read *Appendix A: Esther's Secret Identity* as a class. Then, ask the following questions.

- 🕒 What did you learn about Esther through this article?
- 🕒 How does Robin relate to Esther from his perspective as a Black Jew?
- 🕒 Have you even had to keep part of your identity secret? Why? What were the consequences of doing so?
- 🕒 What issues does Robin pose about the story of Purim?

Activity 2: The Festival of Santa Esterica

(20 minutes)

Another hidden story of Queen Esther has to do with the Anusim (also known as "conversos", Sephardi Jews forced to convert to Catholicism) after their expulsion from Spain in the late 15th century. Faced with threat of execution for Jewish observance, Sephardi conversos created the festival of Santa Esterica to replace Purim.

Take a moment to read *Appendix B: Queen Esther: Patron saint of crypto-Jews*, as a class. Make sure to summarize the material after a few paragraphs have been read so that the students understand the history and significance of The Festival of Santa Esterica.

Activity 3: Gallery of Santa Esterica

(25 minutes)

Print copies of *Appendix C: Saint Esther Gallery* and tape them around the room.

Allow students to walk around and look carefully at each picture, as if walking through an art gallery. Once everyone is done, have students stand by the one that speaks most to them. Have them share why they were drawn to the one they are standing by.

Kehillot haOlam: Purim

Lesson 4: Mexican Saint Esther

Then, ask the following questions:

- 🕒 What similarities did you notice amongst each of these photos?
- 🕒 What are some of the stark differences amongst these photos?
- 🕒 What do you notice about her expression in each of these photos? What is she saying if she could speak to us?
- 🕒 How is “Esther” spelled, when it is written?
- 🕒 What is she holding in these photos? What do you think each of these items symbolize?
- 🕒 How does her dress change from photo to photo? What about it remains the same?
- 🕒 How do you feel about having a physical shrine commemorating one of our Jewish leaders in your home?

Activity 4: Make Your Own Saint

(20 minutes)

Ask the students to think about someone whom they consider to be “a saint.”

- 🕒 What causes someone to be considered a saint? What qualities should such a person possess?

Hand each student a piece of paper and markers. Instruct them to draw an image of the person whom they are thinking, as if they were placed on a shrine like Saint Esther. They can also think of an imaginary person if that is helpful. Encourage them to include symbols of that person’s strength through their clothing, items they’re holding, in the background, or in any other way they can (without using words.)

Closure

(10 minutes)

After the students have completed their Saint image, place them gallery-style around the room, away from the images in Appendix B.

Allow each student to share the intention behind their image and 1 similarity that their saint has with Esther.

Esther's Secret Identity ⁵⁹
By Robin Washington



Several years ago, I started a new job in a new city and wanted to check out a local synagogue. A co-worker, Francine, also Jewish though less practicing than me, came along for the ride.

“One thing,” I told her before we went in. “Don’t tell them we’re Jewish.” She agreed. Then promptly blew it. “Hi. We’re both Jewish and my friend just moved to town, and...”

What I had wanted to know was how they would perceive me: bi-racial and not easily ethnically identifiable, and with a surname rapidly becoming recognized as the blackest in America. (I also thought a covert operation might help in finding out if new members were to be socked with a building fund.)

Jews have been traveling incognito centuries, though not necessarily undercover from other Jews. From Crypto-Jews to escapees from the pogroms and the Holocaust, it’s a story of survival that encompasses every permutation of identity, secret or otherwise. Clark Kent may not have been Jewish, but who can say about Superman?

And then there’s Esther, whose beauty so strikes King Ahasuerus of Persia that he marries her without even asking what religion she is (who performed that ceremony?) Though her cousin and legal guardian Mordecai seems to be the most public Jew in Persia, the king never connects those dots, and Mordecai instructs her to stay mum. Full disclosure comes only after Haman plots to kill all Jews, including, he learns too late, the king’s beloved wife.

I’ve never been sure what to make of the Purim story. It and the Song of Songs are the only two books in the Torah in which God doesn’t make an appearance. Maybe it’s something about kings falling in love with beautiful women.

More likely the message is “don’t be prejudiced,” with which I agree, and “or else,” which I find more troubling: The hanging of Haman, his 10 sons, and the slaying of 75,000 others is more than a little excessive. Sounding a noisemaker is one thing. Decimating a population the size of Evanston, Ill., is another.

⁵⁹ <https://www.myjewishlearning.com/jewish-and/esthers-secret-identity/>

Purim Lesson 4: Mexican Saint Esther

Appendix A

All this, and the Jews' subsequent good fortune under Ahasuerus, is made possible by Esther's timing in outing herself. Had she made that revelation earlier, Haman — if he had exercised more opportunism than racism — could have done away with Mordecai and not the rest of the Jews. But because she waited we saw his true colors.

I've experienced something like that: white people saying the n-word in front of me, and Jews using "schwartz", not knowing I'm black; blacks speaking derisively of Jews unaware of that part of my heritage. I'm happy to say it happens infrequently these days, but maybe less because of improved racial understanding than the way I pre-empt it by introducing myself: "Hi, I'm Robin Washington. I'm a Black Jew."

Still, there are other times when it's best to let my ethnic ambiguity speak for itself. Not to hide anything, just not volunteering; and with race an illusion created by humans, letting people draw whatever conclusion they want.

That also works with my name, by the way. A surefire sign that someone doesn't know me is when I get a letter or email addressed to "Ms. Robin Washington."

She sounds lovely, but I doubt as beautiful as Esther.

Queen Esther: Patron saint of crypto-Jews ⁶⁰

By Ronit Treatman

According to tradition, around 1,900 years before the Spanish Inquisition, a baby girl named Hadassah was born in the Persian Empire. She was orphaned at a very young age and her cousin Mordechai assumed custody of her. Under his tutelage, she internalized the spark of her Jewish identity.

After a few years, an opportunity presented itself, and Mordechai placed her in King Ahasuerus' harem. He told her that her name was now Esther.

Mordechai told Esther that she was still a Jew, but that she must not let anyone know. If she was lucky, one day she could be the queen of Persia. It is said that she was a vegetarian, to avoid eating non-kosher meat. Queen Esther seemed to be fully assimilated, yet she never forgot who she really was. She hid her Judaism, and eventually married King Ahasuerus.

When the Spanish Catholic monarchs Ferdinand and Isabella established the Spanish Inquisition in 1478, many Jews converted to Catholicism outwardly. Inwardly, they kept practicing Judaism in secret, becoming anusim, conversos, or crypto-Jews.

Queen Esther was an inspiration to the anusim in that she modeled a way for them to remember and retain their true, hidden Jewish identity while integrating into the society around them. The conversos implemented a strategy to be able to continue practicing Jewish customs while hiding their observance by inserting a Jewish tradition into a Catholic practice or “syncretism” – the mixing of rituals from different religions.

When the Roman Catholic Church formally recognizes a person as a saint, this person is canonized. A person who has not been canonized may, however, still be referred to as a saint if it is believed that they are “completely perfect in holiness.” The crypto-Jews took advantage of this loophole.

Although Queen Esther was not canonized by the Catholic Church, the anusim transformed her into Saint Esther. They called her Santa Ester or Santa Esterica. They were able to continue honoring Purim by reinventing it as “The Festival of Saint Esther.”

The Festival of Saint Esther originated in Spain. When Spain issued the Edict of Expulsion in 1492, many Jews and conversos escaped to Portugal, taking their traditions with them. Their respite was short-lived and in 1497 the Portuguese king Manuel I married Princess Isabella, the daughter of the Spanish Monarchs Isabella and Ferdinand. A clause in this marriage contract extended the Spanish expulsion to Portugal, ousting the Jews once more.

⁶⁰ Adapted from <https://www.timesofisrael.com/queen-esther-patron-saint-of-crypto-jews/>

Purim Lesson 4: Mexican Saint Esther

Appendix B

The Festival of Saint Esther had two parts. The first part of the holiday was called the Fast of Queen Esther. The women fasted for three days. This fast replicated the fast Queen Esther asked of Mordechai and the Jews of Shushan before she approached King Ahasuerus.

It was too risky to celebrate the Festival of Saint Esther publicly. This was because the Spanish Inquisition considered such an activity to be Judaizing, or the adoption of Jewish beliefs. However, the archives of Mexico's Inquisition retain testimony about this fast.

In 1643, Gabriel de Granada confessed that in his family, the women divided up the fast between them. Each would fast for one day. The punishment meted out by the tribunal of the Inquisition for Judaizing was "relaxation," which meant burning at the stake. Fasting had a special significance for the forced converts. In "The Fast of Esther in the Lore of the Marranos," Moshe Orfali explains that the conversos felt that they lived in a constant state of sin. Fasting helped them atone.

The second, celebratory part of the festival was the Feast of Saint Esther. In her article "Women, Ritual, and Secrecy: The Creation of the Crypto-Jewish Culture," Janet Liebman Jacobs relates that the women lit devotional candles in honor of Saint Esther. It was an occasion of mothers bonding with their daughters. They cooked a banquet together. The mothers took advantage of this opportunity to teach their daughters special family recipes that adhered to the remembered laws of kashrut. The festive, public Purim celebration was transformed into a private meal held at home. As a result, many Jewish traditions were transmitted from mother to daughter.

The crypto-Jews also had their own special way of honoring Esther year round by enshrining her in a piece of art. All Spanish colonies had a special type of religious art form called *santo*. Santos were statues made of wood or ivory which depicted the Virgin Mary, saints, or angels. In Latin America and the American Southwest, these statues were called *bultos*. In crypto-Jewish homes, Queen Esther was fashioned into an icon and transformed into a *bulto* of Saint Esther.

It is less common to find *bultos* or *retablos* of Saint Esther in the American Southwest today. This is the legacy of Archbishop Peter Davis, who was the Archbishop of Santa Fe from 1964 to 1974. According to Jacobs, the archbishop wanted to get rid of all the Jewish rituals in New Mexico. He told his parishioners that there is no Saint Esther in Catholicism. and explained that the celebration of Esther is called Purim, and that Purim is part of the Jewish faith.

Despite Davis' best efforts, it is still possible to find *bultos* and *retablos* of Saint Esther in crypto-Jewish homes today. In "The Book of Esther in Modern Research," by Leonard Greenspoon and Sidnie White Crawford, for example, Santa Ester is portrayed as holding "a hanging-rope in one hand, and a crown in the other, weighing the danger of execution against the safety of royal immunity."

Purim Lesson 4: Mexican Saint Esther

Appendix B

There are also contemporary artists creating icons of Saint Esther. Charles Carrillo is one of New Mexico's most prominent santeros, or artists that carve and paint saints. Carrillo earned a doctorate in archaeology from the University of New Mexico. While working on a dig, he became inspired by the work of the santeros. He conducted a lot of research, and became a self-taught artist whose mission is to preserve the homemade materials, techniques, and designs of the master santeros of 18th century colonial New Mexico. In 2006 he was awarded the National Endowment for the Arts National Heritage Award.

According to Carrillo there is a large community of crypto-Jews in New Mexico. "They came here in the 1500s," he told me. "I haven't done one in a long time, but sometimes I still get a commission to create a Santa Ester." There is an old saying in New Mexico, "A cada santo llega su función," meaning that there is a saint for every occasion.

"My Santa Ester always has dark hair," Carrillo said. "It's a New Mexico tradition. I want my artwork to reflect her attributes. Esther means 'Hadassah' in Hebrew. Hadas is a myrtle or fragrant plant," he explained.

The red curtains framing Santa Ester are traditional in a New Mexico retablo. They are an allusion to a stage and symbolize that this has been revealed to us, and that we had better pay attention before the curtains close.

The Spanish Inquisition formally ended in 1834. It is rational to believe that crypto-Judaism was something that existed in the past and is no longer occurring. However, it has persisted, and there are many anusim that continue their secret practices to this day while living in Spain, Portugal, Italy, Latin America, and the American Southwest.

Several organizations have been established in recent years to help anusim conduct research about their family background. Name Your Roots was formed in Israel by a group of academics who hope to help facilitate research into converso family names and customs. Shavei Israel, was created to assist those descendants of Jews who wish to return to Judaism.











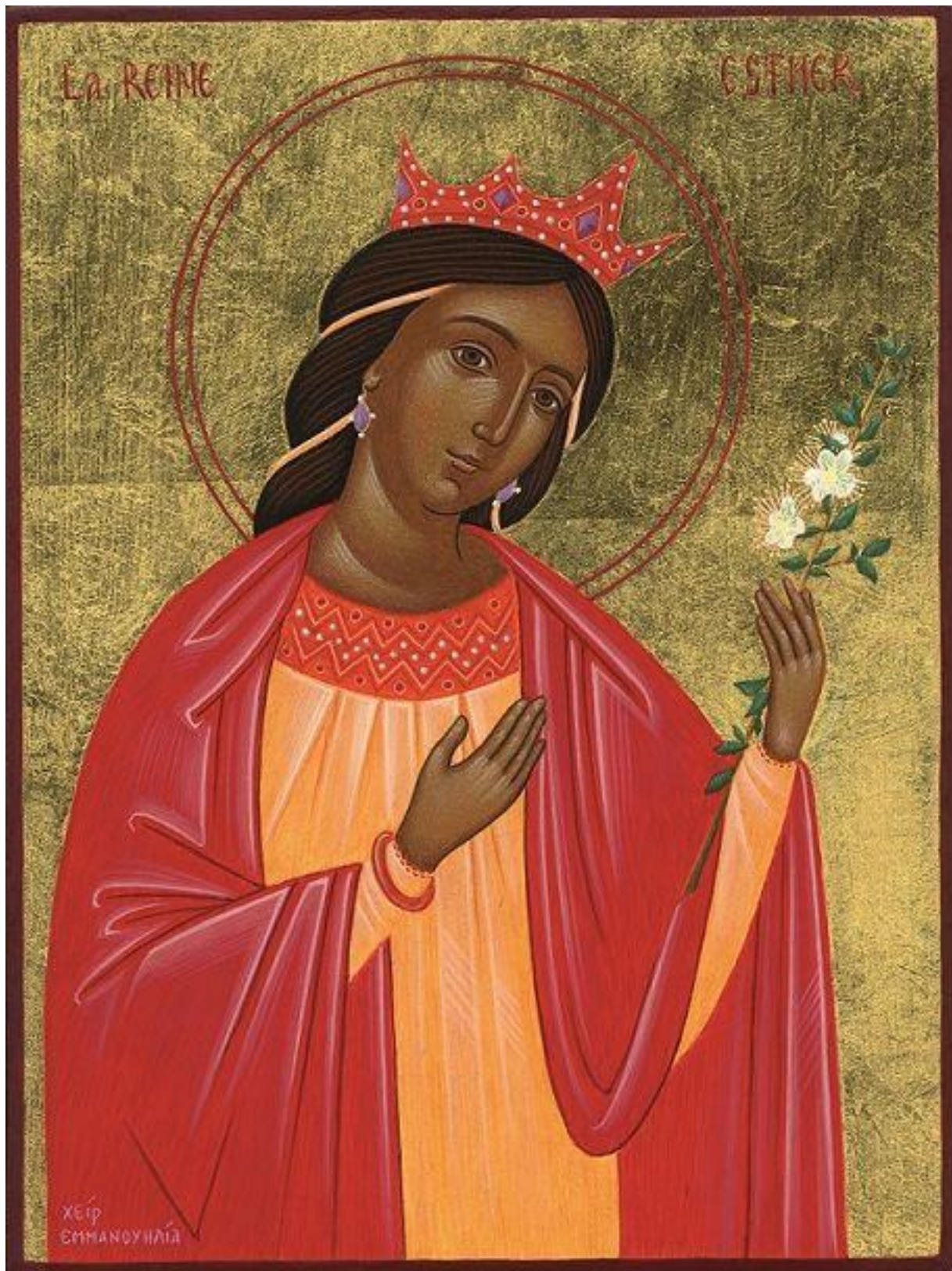


www.ikonart.com

Purim Lesson 4: Mexican Saint Esther
Appendix C









Kehillot haOlam: Purim

Lesson 5: Authentic Assessment

Goals

- To synthesize and apply the learning from lessons 1-3.
- To create a new Purim practice that feels authentic to them
- To honor the Purim practices that they have explored throughout this unit.

Essential Questions

- What have I learned from this unit?
- How can I take what I've learned into my life today?
- How can the learning from the unit impact my current Purim practice?

Objectives (*Students will be able to...*)

- Synthesize the learning and articulate their takeaways that occurred between lessons 1-3.
- Summarize how they plan to honor the Purim traditions learned throughout this unit.

Notes to the Educator

This lesson looks the same for every unit. While the content and number of lessons in each unit differ, this final lesson will include an authentic assessment of the student's choosing. This lesson lists some options for the students, however there are an endless number of options. As best you can (within reason) encourage students to think creatively regarding how they want to show their learning on this day. For many of these options, it is advised that they choose their authentic assessment assignment *before* the unit begins, as they may need to do things throughout the lessons to contribute to this assessment. Instruct them to do a different Authentic Assessment for each unit.

As the educator, you can also decide that every student does the same assignment but adjusts it to appeal to their needs and understanding of the material. If that is the case, it is advised that you choose 1 option per unit so that they do not duplicate assignments between units.

Refer to the Hanukkah Authentic Assessment on p. 199 for script.

Kehillot haOlam: Purim

Lesson 5: Authentic Assessment

Set Induction

(2 minutes)

Explain to the students that they will do an “authentic assessment” of the learning gained throughout this unit. An authentic assessment is a way for an educator to gauge what material was learned throughout a given time. Remind students that unlike in school where they are given tests, and papers, this authentic assessment, allows them to create something meaningful to them.

Let the students know that you will provide a list of authentic assessment ideas that they could do for this Purim Unit. They will see some of the same options each time as well as some variation for each unit; however, they must do different assessments for each one. The asterisk (*) indicates the assessments that are unique to the unit. If none of these ideas speak to the students, encourage them to bring in other ideas. There are only 2 criteria: it must show what they have learned in some way and it should be something that they are excited to create and share with the class.

Activity 1

(10-15 minutes)

Begin by reviewing what they have learned during this Purim Unit. Encourage students to list as many things as they can remember first, then you can jump in to remind them of details.

Lesson 1: Moroccan Purim

Lesson 2: Yemen and Baghdad

Lesson 3: The Great Purim Bake Off

Lesson 4: Mexican Saint Esther

Activity 2

(10 minutes)

Now it is their turn to create something meaningful. List the variety of options for them to choose from.

Cook Purim Food *

- Research Purim food from around the world. Make one of the dishes and post it on social media with the #GlobalJewishFood. [Here](#) is link #1 and [here](#) is link #2 to get you started. ⁶¹ ⁶²

⁶¹ https://www.aish.com/h/purim/p/Purim_Foods_around_the_World.html

⁶² <https://globaljews.org/blog/a-global-purim-menu-and-identity-discussion-guide/>

Kehillot haOlam: Purim

Lesson 5: Authentic Assessment

Explore Other Purim Traditions *

- Take a look at [this link](#) for ideas and find a way to present your learning to the rest of the class.

Ululation Lesson *

- Using the skills you learned during lesson 1, teach someone else to ululate. Record a video and share it on your Instagram or TikTok account.

Create Your Own Hamantaschen *

- Create your own sweet or savory Hamantaschen using spices and ingredients used throughout this unit.

Jewish Ofrenda *

- Watch the Disney Pixar film, Coco. Create your own Jewish ofrenda like they do in the film, with Saint Esther and any other ancestors whose memory you would like to honor. Take pictures to share with the class.

Vision Board

- Using magazines, paper, scissors and glue, create a collage board that includes ideas learned throughout this lesson. This should somehow illustrate how you plan to bring these global Jewish practices to life.

Blog Post

- Write a blog post that illustrates your three main takeaways from this unit. What did you learn and how has it impacted your Jewish identity? What questions do you still have? What are you most looking forward to exploring further?

Vlog

- Similar to the blog, record yourself discussing your three main takeaways from this unit. You could even bring in video clippings from previous lessons to better illustrate your learning.

Instagram Story

- Using your Instagram or a new Instagram account, document the variety of activities that we did throughout this unit. This can be done as the lessons are taught and/or something larger at the end to summarize.

Song Playlist

- Create a playlist of Purim music. This can be comprised of already existing Jewish music for Purim or secular songs that focus on Purim themes. Publish the

Kehillot haOlam: Purim

Lesson 5: Authentic Assessment

playlist somewhere (perhaps the synagogues website and/or social media page) so that others can enjoy these songs.

Organize a Service

- Inspired by ideas learned about Purim around the world, create a Shabbat service for the synagogue. This could include various songs, texts and food for Shabbat Oneg.

Cooking

- Cook a dish involving fall foods that are in season during Purim. Creatively explain each food's origin and share some of the community's history in which it derives.

Interview

- Find someone who is of a different Jewish origin than you. Interview them about their family's history and any unique customs, traditions or rituals associated with Purim within their family.

UNIT 6: PASSOVER

Kehillot haOlam: Passover

Lesson 1: Ethiopian Passover

Goals

- To review the story of Passover.
- To discuss the impact of leaving one's home.
- To provide background as to why Ethiopian Jews break their dishware on Passover.
- To introduce the idea of Kintsugi.

Essential Questions

- How have Ethiopian Jews incorporated their own Exodus story into their Passover tradition?
- Why is the story of Passover eternally relevant?
- How does the idea of Kintsugi relate to Ethiopian Jews breaking their dishware on Passover?

Objectives (*Students will be able to...*)

- Articulate how the Passover story relates to the Ethiopian Jewish community.
- Explain the idea of Kintsugi.
- Reflect on how they will “start anew” this Passover.

Supplies:

- Ceramic bowls, 1 per student
- Pillowcase, 1 for every 3 students
- Hammer
- Clear epoxy resin or other ceramic adhesives
- Gold mica powder or liquid gold leaf
- Thin disposable paint brushes, 1 per student
- Scrap paper
- Masking tape (optional)
- Paper bag (optional)

Other things to prepare

- (optional) Copies of *Appendix A: Story of Passover*, 1 per student
- Copies of *Appendix B: Kintsugi*, 1 per student

Kehillot haOlam: Passover

Lesson 1: Ethiopian Passover

Set Induction

(5 minutes)

Discuss the following questions as a class:

- 🕒 What does it mean to be home? How would you define “home.”
- 🕒 What does home look like, smell like, and feel like you?

Explain to the students that the concept of “home” is a sensitive subject for people who have ever had to leave their home. This is especially the case for those who have had to leave their homes quickly in order to seek shelter.

Activity 1: Passover Review

(15 minutes)

Take a moment to review the story of Passover. For guidance, use *Appendix A: Passover Story*. You can do this by acting out the story, quizzing your students on the details through [this](#) ⁶³ link, or using any other way to reviewing the story.

Afterwards, remind that Passover celebrates the Israelites’ redemption and escape from 400 years of Egyptian slavery.

Activity 2: A Modern Exodus Story

(30 minutes)

Remind students that unfortunately there are still people around the world who are enslaved. Even those who have left slavery, still feel as though that dark part of their history is a part of them.

Have students research Ethiopian Jewish history and create a timeline of events. There is a lot of material on this subject, so here are a few links to use to begin the research

- [Beit Hatfutsot](#) ⁶⁴
- [My Jewish Learning](#) ⁶⁵
- [Jewish Virtual Library](#) ⁶⁶ – includes sample timeline

- 🕒 How do you think Ethiopian Jews would define their concept of home?

Activity 3: Ethiopian Passover Tradition

(20 minutes)

The Ethiopian Jews’ history is strikingly similar to that of their Israelite ancestors. The Jewish community there underwent an exodus of their own in 1985, when Operation

⁶³ <https://jeopardylabs.com/play/jewpardy-passover-edition3>

⁶⁴ <https://dbs.bh.org.il/place/ethiopia>

⁶⁵ <https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/the-history-of-ethiopian-jewry/>

⁶⁶ <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/timeline-of-ethiopian-jewish-history>

Kehillot haOlam: Passover

Lesson 1: Ethiopian Passover

Moses took almost 8,000 Jews from Sudan to a safe haven in Israel. In commemoration of Passover and their own past, Ethiopian Jews break all of their dishes and make new ones to symbolize a complete break from the past and a new start. The tradition is in keeping with the hope for emancipation and redemption that the holiday signifies.

Hand each student a ceramic bowl, pillowcase and hammer. Ask them to think of something they are holding onto from their past, something they want to forget or get rid of in some way. Once their idea is vividly in their head, ask them to hammer the bowl while inside the pillowcase so that it breaks into *at least 3* pieces. Like the Ethiopian Jews do on Passover, smashing the bowl is as if they are smashing their bad memory away. Think of it like an “emotional spring cleaning!”

They should not smash it completely because they will then need to gather as many pieces of the bowl as possible. Have them put the pieces of their bowl into a large paper bag to bring back into the classroom.

Activity 4: Starting Anew

(30 minutes)

Now that the students have “shattered their past,” it is time to start anew. Introduce the students to Kintsugi: the Japanese art of finding beauty in broken dishes.

Pass out copies of *Appendix B: Kintsugi* to each student and read it together as a class.

Take a moment to set an intention for what they are about to do. Allow them to think of how they are going to use this opportunity to start fresh. Students can share their ideas or keep them to themselves.

Then, follow the steps provided in [this](#) link.⁶⁷ If you have students who are visual learners, I suggest having them watch the video embedded in the link.

Closure

(10 minutes)

Use this opportunity to reflect on the day using the following questions:

- ❓ What can we learn from the Ethiopian practice of breaking our dishes during Passover?
- ❓ How did this process help you “shatter your past” and begin to start new?
- ❓ How can the art of Kintsugi help you understand the ways in which you understand the concept of “home” or the imperfections in your life?

⁶⁷ <https://www.invaluable.com/blog/kintsugi/>

Story of Passover ⁶⁸

The holiday of Passover (Pesach in Hebrew) is perhaps one of the most central to Jewish life and history. More widely observed than any other holiday, Passover celebrates the biblical account of the Israelites' redemption and escape from 400 years of Egyptian slavery. Holiday rituals include a dramatic retelling of the Exodus story and many unique food traditions. We come together with friends and family to celebrate the great lessons of the story: the blessing of freedom and the reminder that since we were once slaves and were freed, it is our responsibility to work for freedom for all people, everywhere.

The word "Passover" is derived from the Hebrew word pasach, which means "passed over," referring to the 10th plague that killed the Egyptian firstborn, but miraculously "passed over" the houses of the Israelites (more on that below).

The Passover Story

Found in the Torah, the Passover story tells of the Israelites' slavery, deliverance, and escape ("the Exodus") from Egypt.

The story begins with Joseph, son of Jacob, who was sold into slavery by his brothers and arrived in Egypt as a poor, powerless servant. Joseph's wisdom and ability to interpret dreams soon brought him power and status, though, and he became the Egyptian king's trusted advisor. His entire family joined him in Egypt, as did many of the rest of the Israelites. There they prospered and multiplied for many generations.

But a new king ("pharaoh") came to power in Egypt – one who did not remember how helpful Joseph had been. The Israelites' numbers had greatly increased over many years, and the new Pharaoh was suspicious of them, fearing they would someday rise up against him. So he treated them harshly, forcing them to work as slaves in terrible conditions. Nevertheless, the Israelites survived and continued to multiply.

Dismayed by their fortitude, Pharaoh took harsher action, declaring that all sons born to Israelite women should be killed at birth. The courageous Israelite midwives, Shifrah and Puah, defied this decree, but the infant boys were still in great danger.

When an Israelite woman, Yocheved, had a baby boy, she feared for his life. She placed him in a basket and set him floating in the Nile River, near where people came to bathe. As Yocheved's daughter, Miriam, watched from a distance, Pharaoh's daughter came to the river and found the baby in the basket. She took him, named him Moses ("drawn from the water"), and raised him as her own.

Growing up in the palace, Moses knew very little of the life he might have led. As he grew, however, he became aware of the plight of his people. One day, seeing an Egyptian taskmaster beating an Israelite slave, Moses killed the taskmaster. Realizing what he had done, Moses fled to the Midian, where he married a Midianite woman, Tziporah, and became a shepherd.

Tending his flock one day, Moses came upon an amazing sight – a bush that was burning, but not consumed. God spoke to Moses there, telling him that Moses and his brother, Aaron,

⁶⁸ <https://reformjudaism.org/passover-history>

Passover Lesson 1: Ethiopia

Appendix A

would free the Israelites from slavery. Moses was unsure anyone would listen to him, but God promised support and powerful signs, so Moses left Midian and returned to Egypt.

Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and demanded Pharaoh free the Jews (“Let my people go,” Moses tells Pharaoh in Exodus 5:1). But Pharaoh, skeptical that Moses spoke on behalf of God, refused. In retaliation, Pharaoh forced the Israelites to work harder.

God then told Moses that, as proof of God’s power, the Egyptians would suffer a series of plagues until Pharaoh agreed to let the Jews go:

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Turning the water of the Nile to blood | 6. Boils |
| 2. Frogs | 7. Hail |
| 3. Lice | 8. Locusts |
| 4. Wild beasts | 9. Darkness |
| 5. Cattle disease | 10. Slaying of the Egyptian firstborn |

During the last plague, God killed the firstborn of each Egyptian family, but “passed over” (thus “Passover”) the houses of the Israelites (who had marked their doors with lamb’s blood), leaving their children unharmed. With this plague Pharaoh finally relented, and let the Israelites go. They hurriedly packed and left Egypt, without enough time for their bread rise (hence the holiday’s prohibition on eating leavened, or risen, grain products, and the custom of eating matzah, unleavened bread).

Pharaoh immediately regretted his decision, and his army chased the Israelites to the Red (actually “Reed”) Sea. With the sea ahead of them, and Pharaoh’s army closing in behind, the Jews appeared to be doomed. At that very moment, though, God told Moses to stretch his staff over the sea, and, in perhaps the greatest miracle in all of Jewish tradition, the waters parted, allowing the Jews to cross on dry land.

Just as they reached the far shore of the sea, the waters closed, drowning Pharaoh and his soldiers. Moses, Miriam, and all the Israelites sang songs of praise to God for their deliverance, including *Mi Chamochah*, which appears in our modern liturgy, and the Israelites began their journey in the desert.

History of the Celebration

The Torah commands us to observe Passover for seven days. Many Jews in North America and in Israel follow this injunction, but some outside Israel celebrate for eight days. The additional day was added to Passover and other holidays around 700-600 B.C.E. to guard against a possible error because elaborate networks of mountaintop bonfires were used to signal holidays’ beginnings. Although today’s dependable calendar allows us to know when holidays start and end, the eight-day celebration remains ingrained in law and practice for some Jews outside Israel.

Celebrated in various ways throughout history, Passover incorporates remnants of ancient spring harvest festivals. When the Temple existed, the holiday was one of three major festivals that required pilgrimages to Jerusalem to bring sacrifices. After the destruction of the Second Temple, Passover became a more communal, home-centered holiday, with the Haggadah and the seder as we know them mostly finalized around 500-600 C.E.

Kintsugi: The Japanese Art of Finding Beauty in Broken Dishes 69

When you accidentally break a plate or a bowl, chances are you throw it away. However, what if you could put it back together and have it look even more beautiful than before?

That is the idea behind kintsugi, the ancient Japanese art of restoring broken ceramic pottery that might otherwise end up in the trash. In Japanese, the word kintsugi means "golden rejoining," and refers to the Zen philosophy of acknowledging flaws, embracing change, and restoring an object with a newfound beauty. It's believed by many that this special technique originated in the 15th century when Japanese shogun Ashikaga Yoshimitsu accidentally broke his favorite tea bowl and sent it to China for repairs. When it was returned to him - pieced together with metal staples - he charged his Japanese craftsmen with finding a more aesthetic repair method.



What they developed was the method of kintsugi, which uses lacquer dusted with gold or other metals to repair cracked, chipped, or broken dishes. The results are gorgeous.

The idea behind kintsugi is to highlight - rather than hide - an object's flaws, making them beautiful instead of unsightly. This is a prominent theme in the Japanese philosophy of wabi-sabi, which is all about embracing imperfections.

Traditional kintsugi uses urushi lacquer (derived from the sap of a Chinese lacquer tree) to repair broken pottery. The process involves applying multiple layers of lacquer to the seam using a fine-point paintbrush, letting it dry, removing excess with turpentine oil, then polishing the surface until smooth. The final layer of lacquer is coated in golden dust and then burnished to result in a beautifully repaired object.

There are a few ways to recreate the beautiful look of kintsugi at home. We suggest using a clear epoxy to reattach a fragmented piece, holding it in place with modeling clay and letting cure for at least one hour. Once completely dry, remove the clay and scrape off excess with a small razor blade. Using a fine-point paintbrush, apply liquid gilding over the repaired seam for a glimmering golden look.

Kehillot haOlam: Passover

Lesson 2: Indian and Mexican Matzo

Goals

- To review the importance of Matzo during story of Passover.
- To make two different kinds of Matzo: Indian “*Bakhri*” and Mexican “*Pan de Semita*”

Essential Questions

- How have Indian and Mexican Jews adapted Matzo during Passover?

Objectives (Students will be able to...)

- Explain how the ways in which Indian and Mexican Jews have adapted Matzo for Passover.
- Compare and contrast the ways in which they celebrate Passover with that of the Indian and Mexican Jewish community.

Supplies:

- Indian Bakhri (x4)
 - 1 1/2 cups white rice flour
 - 3/4 cup plus 1-2 Tbsp boiling water
 - 1/2 teaspoon or less salt
- Mexican Pan de Semita (makes 4 rolls)
 - 3 1/2 cup Potato flour
 - 1/2 cup Dark brown sugar
 - 1 tsp. Ground anise seed
 - 1 tsp Freshly ground cinnamon (Ceylon)
 - 1/3 cup Coconut butter, about 3 oz
 - 1 1/2 cups Warm water
 - 1/2 cup Chopped pecans
 - 1/2 cup Raisins, soaked in the juice of one orange
 - 1 tsp. Orange zest
 - 1 tsp. Active dry yeast
 - 3.5 oz Piloncillo (about 1/2 cup)
 - 1/2 tsp. Salt

Other things to prepare

- Print copies of *Appendix A: Why Matzo?* - 1 per student
- Print copies of *Appendix B: Biblical Rituals and Spicy Biryani*, 1 per student
- Print copies of *Appendix C: Indian Bakhri*, 1 per student
- Print copies of *Appendix D: Texas Mexican Secret Spanish Jews Today*, 1 per student
- Print copies of *Appendix E: Pan de Semita*, 1 per student

Kehillot haOlam: Passover

Lesson 2: Indian and Mexican Matzo

Set Induction

(10 minutes)

Begin today's lesson with a quick text study. Pass out copies of *Appendix A: Why Matzo* to each student. Have them read it to themselves and then turn to a partner to discuss the questions below.

Activity 1: Intro to Indian Passover

(15 minutes)

Pass out copies of *Appendix B: Biblical Rituals and Spicy Biryani* to each student. Read it aloud as a class, making special note of the Indian foods mentioned in the article.

- ❓ What did you learn about the Jewish community in India from this article?
- ❓ What are some of the ways that the Indian Jewish community celebrate Passover?
- ❓ How are they similar and different to the ways in which you celebrate Passover?

Activity 2: Make Rice *Bakhri*

(30 minutes)

Bakhri, a rice flour Indian flat bread (similar to chapati), is a Matzo alternative which the Bene Israel, the largest Indian Jewish community, make on the Passover instead of the everyday wheat flour version.

Pass out copies of *Appendix C: Rice Bakhri* to each student. Break the students into groups of 3-4 students. Each group will make a separate batch of Rice *Bakhri* which will then be judged at the end.

Once groups have completed their *Bakhri*, judge each dish based on taste, crunchiness, and overall aesthetic appeal.

Activity 3: *Bakhri* Reflection

(5 minutes)

As they enjoy tasting their *Bakhri*, asks the following questions:

- ❓ How is this dish similar and different to the matzo you normally eat on Passover?
- ❓ For those who have ever made Matzo – how is the process of making *Bakhri* similar to and different from Matzo.

Activity 4: Intro to Mexican *Pan de Semita*

(15 minutes)

Like the Jewish community in India, Mexican Jews have also adapted matzo to fit the ingredients which were more readily available to them.

Kehillot haOlam: Passover

Lesson 2: Indian and Mexican Matzo

Origin of Semita Bread:

In the 16th century, a group of Semitic Jews came to the new world, brought by Luis de Carvajal y de la Cueva to settle what is now the state of Nuevo Leon, escaping the Spanish Inquisition that was in full force at the time. This Jewish community colonized the states of Nuevo Leon, Coahuila, and parts of what is now Texas, and continued to practice their faith in secret. It is thought that this community ate bread during Passover very similar to what we consider semita bread now, with the exception of the piloncillo (Mexican brown sugar) and raisins. The origin of this bread, however, can be traced back to Spain and Islamic North Africa. ⁷⁰

Pass out copies of *Appendix D: Texas Mexican Secret Spanish Jews Today* to each student. Then, discuss the following questions:

- ❓ What is Pan de semita and why is it eaten during Passover?
- ❓ How is the Mexican celebration of Passover related to Easter? What is the relationship between Pan de semita and Easter lent?

Activity 5: Make *Pan de Semita*

(30 minutes)

Pass out copies of *Appendix E: Pan de Semita* to each student. Break the students into the same groups as before. Each group will make a separate batch of *Pan de Semita* which will then be judged at the end, just like the *Bahkri*.

Once groups have completed their *Pan de Semita*, judge each dish based on taste, and overall aesthetic appeal.

Closure

(5 minutes)

As they enjoy tasting their *Pan de Semita*, asks the following questions:

- ❓ Which ingredient in this dish would you NOT expect to see in a Passover dish?
 - Yeast
- ❓ Why do you think yeast was allowed in this dish?

⁷⁰ <https://dorastable.com/mexican-semita-bread-semitas-chorreadas/>

Why Matzo?

Deuteronomy 16:3

לֹא־תֹאכַל עָלָיו חֶמֶץ שִׁבְעַת יָמִים תֹּאכַל־עָלָיו מִצּוֹת לֶחֶם עֲנִי כִּי בְּחַפְזוֹן
יֵצְאָתָּ מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם לְמַעַן תִּזְכֹּר אֶת־יוֹם צֵאתְךָ מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם כֹּל יְמֵי חַיֶּיךָ:

You shall not eat anything leavened with it; for seven days thereafter you shall eat unleavened bread, bread of distress—for you departed from the land of Egypt hurriedly—so that you may remember the day of your departure from the land of Egypt as long as you live.

Exodus 12:39

וַיֹּאֲפוּ אֶת־הַבֶּצֶק אֲשֶׁר הוֹצִיאוּ מִמִּצְרַיִם עִגְת מִצּוֹת כִּי לֹא חֶמֶץ כִּי־גִרְשׁוּ
מִמִּצְרַיִם וְלֹא יִכְלוּ לְהִתְמַהֵמֵה וְגַם־צִדָּה לֹא־עָשׂוּ לָהֶם:

And they baked unleavened cakes of the dough that they had taken out of Egypt, for it was not leavened, since they had been driven out of Egypt and could not delay; nor had they prepared any provisions for themselves.

Questions to consider:

- Ⓢ *According to these texts, why do we eat Matzo on Passover?*
- Ⓢ *What does Matzo symbolize?*
- Ⓢ *What are the requirements surrounding matzo according to these texts?*
- Ⓢ *How are these texts different? How are they similar?*

**Biblical Rituals and Spicy Biryani:
Discovering the Passover Traditions of India's Largest Jewish Community** ⁷¹
By Shulamit Shaulker Madnick

My mom was born in Byculla and lived there with her family from the early 1940s through the early 1960s. Growing up, she often accompanied my grandfather, who worked for the railway, on trips to the kosher butcher shop before holidays, special occasions and sometimes also on Fridays. The kosher butcher shop was located within a small meat market in Bandra, a nearby neighborhood, where they bought choice cuts of goat or lamb. An Orthodox man was butchering and always about the shop, she said.

On holidays, some Bene Israel families would group together to buy a whole goat or lamb, to be butchered by the kosher butcher at their local synagogue. It would then be split among the families.

A fragrant lamb or goat biryani, an aromatic layered basmati rice dish with masala (“curried”) lamb or goat, was then laboriously and patiently prepared. The biryani was topped with vibrant and textured garnishes including fried crispy onions, cashews, plumped raisins and cilantro leaf chips. This was and still is our family’s classic, celebratory dish on Passover and Rosh Hashanah.



During the eight days of Passover, the Bene Israel in India would use only fresh ingredients, and not dry spices, to eliminate the risk of eating hametz – the leavened bread products forbidden to all observant Jews on Passover. Wet masala was made from fresh cilantro, onions, garlic and hot green chili pepper. Fresh turmeric and ginger roots took the place of powdered turmeric and ginger. Nowadays, due to the abundance of kosher-for-Passover products in

Israel, the Indian community uses both dry spices and green wet masala.

Other adaptations were made on Passover. In place of wheat flour bakhri, an Indian flat bread similar to chapati, a crispier rice flour version was made. On some days for dinner, during the intermediate days of the holiday, crepe-like polis were made from rice flour, as my friend Shayela Cowen, a member of the Bene Israel community now living in Australia, shared. The crepes were then sweetened with shira, a thick date syrup similar to Israeli silan. Shira was also served as the community’s version of haroset, although recipes vary from one household to the next. Instead of dried tea leaves, lemongrass leaves were used to steep tea. Sugar wasn’t used on Passover, so instead, my mom said, they would bite into a date while sipping the tea. Non-alcoholic “wine” for the Kiddush was made from rehydrated currants, as was done year round.

⁷¹ Adapted from: <https://www.haaretz.com/food/MAGAZINE-discovering-the-passover-traditions-of-india-s-largest-jewish-community-1.5436251>

Passover Lesson 2: Indian and Mexican Matzo

Appendix B

Passover preparations began days in advance with matzah making, fittings for new clothes at the tailor's, whitewashing the walls, re-tinning the pots, storing and replacing the earthenware, and ridding the home of hametz. With no refrigeration, most cooking ingredients were bought fresh daily, meaning there was hardly any hametz to purge, my mom pointed out.

While some recall the Bene Israel made matzah at their homes, my mother's family in Mumbai never did. The community came together to make round matzahs, similar to today's artisanal, labor-intensive matzah shmurah. My grandmother had a short-lived stint one year at the communal matzah making at the Baghdadi Indian synagogue, Magen David. My grandfather wasn't too pleased she was working outside of their home.

For the Seder in India, the Bene Israel community had its own illustrated Passover haggadahs, written in Marathi and Hebrew. The first Bene Israel Bombay Haggadah was printed (lithographed) in 1846; a second illustrated haggadah came out of Poona in 1874, the second largest center of the Bene Israel, after Mumbai. Yosef Haim Yerushalmi captures the differences between the two haggadahs in the book: "Haggadah and History."

While the [1846] Bombay illustrations were still closely linked to Amsterdam prototypes, this in the [1874] Poona Haggadah have managed to drift into a sphere of their own. Even as they retain the basic pattern, they are now palpably Indian in tone and detail," he wrote.

In Israel, most of the community uses standard Israeli haggadahs during the Seder. I grew up watching my mom and the elders of the community reading the prayers from a Siddur and Mahzor with Hebrew transliterated into Indian (Marathi) script. Not knowing how to read in Marathi, I found these transliterated holy books curious and mesmerizingly magical.

I felt spiritually connected to my ancestry in India at the sight of the tattered original 1874 Poona Haggadah at the Library of Congress. Reverently leafing through the frayed pages adorned with Marathi and Hebrew, and burnt at the edges, I was transported to another time and place, walking in my mother's shoes, running through her grandparents' village in India, later attending nursing school. Imagining myself walking with her and my grandfather to that butcher shop in Bandra, that is by now long gone.



Rice Bakhri; Indian Rice Flour Flat Bread

Ingredients

- 1 1/2 cups white rice flour
- 3/4 cup plus 1-2 Tbsp boiling water
- 1/2 teaspoon or less salt
- Extra rice flour for dusting and rolling
- Room temperature water for brushing



Directions

1. Put a cast iron pan or an Indian tava on low medium heat.
2. In a medium bowl whisk together the flour and salt, add the boiling water in increments while mixing with a heat resistant spatula or a wooden spoon. Carefully knead, make sure the dough isn't too hot, for 3-4 minutes.
3. Divide the dough into 8 equal parts, roll into each into a ball, and cover with a clean kitchen towel or a paper towel.
4. Press each ball of dough in between your palms and dip both sides in a bowl with the rice flour. Dust a rolling surface with rice flour. With the palm of your hand, press the dough into a circle while making sure it doesn't stick to the surface. Once in a while dust additional rice flour as needed. Finish rolling gently with a rolling pin.
5. The edges around the circle of the rolled out flat bread aren't smooth with rice flour dough, as it is when rolling out wheat flour dough.
6. Lay the rolled out flat bread on your palm, heavily dusted side up (the bottom part while you were rolling), dust off any excess rice flour and cook in the pan, heavily dusted side, the one you just brushed off up.
7. Brush the top with water and let cook for 1-2 minutes. Flip, brush with water and continue cooking for 1-2 minutes longer.
8. Optional at your own risk: If you've got a gas stove (not flat surface) turn up the flame to medium/high and put the top side of the cooked flat bread directly on the fire for a few seconds. It will puff up. Take off the heat immediately as soon as it puffs up.
9. For a flat surface stove, put a cooling rack or a wire grate (with little feet) on top of the burner. Turn the burner to high. After cooking the flat bread in the cast iron, flip the bread on the wire for a couple of seconds. It will immediately puff. Take it off the heat as soon as it puffs.
10. Enjoy!

Texas Mexican Secret Spanish Jews Today ⁷²

by Anne deSola Cardoza



Why do Mexican Americans in Texas and in the Mexican province of nearby Monterrey eat "Semitic bread" on Passover/Lent? According to scholar Richard G. Santos, Tex-Mex pastries such as pan dulce, pan de semita, trenzas, cuernos, pan de hero, and pan de los protestantes (Protestant's bread) are similar to familiar Jewish pastries eaten by Sephardic Jews today in many other parts of the world.

Pan de semita was eaten in pre-inquisition Spain by a Jew or an Arab Moor. Today, its popular in Texas and in that part of Mexico bordering Texas. It translates into

English as "Semitic bread". It's a Mexican-American custom in the Texas and Tex-Mex border area today to eat pan de semita during Lent which occurs on or around the Jewish Passover.

You bake pan de semita by combining two cups of flour, one half to two-thirds cup of water, a few tablespoons of butter or olive oil, mix and bake unleavened. Pan de semita is really the recipe for 17th century secret Jewish Matzoh, and it's eaten by all Mexicans today in the north Mexican/Texas border area, regardless of religion.

Only in Texas and along the Texas-Mexican border is a special type of pan de semita baked, according to Dr. Santos, who himself is descended from secret Spanish Jews of the area who've lived in that part of Texas and Monterrey since colonial times. The special Texas pan de semita of the border has special ingredients: only vegetable oil, flour raisins, nuts, and water. The raisins, pecans, and vegetable oil were identified, according to Dr. Santos, as selected ingredients of secret Jews of New Spain.

Pastry bakers from Mexico claim this type of pan de semita is unknown in central Mexico. Other pan de semitas are found in Guadalajara made from wheat (Semita de trigo) in which milk is substituted for the water. In Texas and also in Guadalajara, one also finds Semita de aniz (anis). However, semita de trigo and semita de aniz never include raisins and pecans, and to use pork lard is forbidden. Only olive oil or butter can be used to make semitic bread.

Eating cactus and egg omelets is also a custom during the Passover week/Lent of secret Jews of the 17th century and of Mexican Americans from Texas and northern Mexico today. The omelets are called nopalitos lampreados. It's a custom to eat only this food during Lent. Is this an old Passover rite of secret Jews as well?

⁷² Adapted from <http://sefarad.org/lm/011/texas.html>

Passover Lesson 2: Indian and Mexican Matzo

Appendix D

No other bread except pan de semita was allowed during Lent, and pan de semita is unleavened and contains the same ingredients as Matzoh.

Rural Mexican Americans in Texas also drink mint tea, fruit juices, or chocolate during Easter week. There's much evidence in the foods that these people were also observing Passover in addition to Lent and Easter, although many didn't know it until it was pointed out that they were eating traditional 16th century Sephardic foods, especially the bitter herbs added to the meal.

Mexican Americans in Texas cast the first piece of the 'masa' (dough, sounds like Matzoh) into the fire - before cooking up a batch of corn tortillas or bread. These same people also do not eat pork on Fridays. Some Mexican Americans don't eat pork after 6 p.m. or sundown on Friday.

Another Lenten/Passover food is 'capirotada'. It's wheat bread (pilon-cillo) to which raw sugar, cinnamon, cheese, butter, pecans, peanuts and raisins are added. These are identical ingredients to those used by secret Spanish Jews in the New Spain of 1640 to make their breads and cakes. Even the ingredients and recipes have been recorded by the Holy Office of the Inquisition and saved to this day in the archives.

Mexican Americans from Texas don't practice abstaining from meat on Fridays, long before the Catholic church relaxed the rule of not eating meat on Fridays. Also older women cover their hand while praying in the same manner as Jewish women cover their heads. The Holy Office never extended its long arm to the area known today as Texas. Descendants of Canary Islanders, 16 families who came to Texas in 1731 established the township of San Fernando de Bexar which today is San Antonio. These families intermarried with the local population of nearby Nuevo Reyno de Leon, many of whom were Spanish and Portuguese secret Jews who moved to the area specifically because the Holy Office of the Inquisition didn't operate in 18th century 'Texas'. All Mexicans of the area today are not of Sephardic descent.

However, a large number still use the oral traditions which are eminently of Sephardic origin. Historical exposure to and intermarriage with Sephardic secret Jews has occurred in the parts of Mexico that were "safer havens" for secret Jewish settlement, and those havens happen to be southern Texas and the surrounding Mexican border and adjacent areas. Today, Texans in the San Antonio area are giving celebration to the secret Jewish origin of some of their foods, culture, and oral traditions.

Pan de Semita Bread ⁷³

Ingredients

- 3 ½ cup Potato flour
- ½ cup Dark brown sugar
- 1 tsp. Ground anise seed
- 1 tsp Freshly ground cinnamon (Ceylon)
- 1/3 cup Coconut butter, about 3 oz
- 1 ½ cups Warm water
- ½ cup Chopped pecans
- ½ cup Raisins, soaked in the juice of one orange
- 1 tsp. Orange zest
- 1 tsp. Active dry yeast
- 3.5 oz Piloncillo (about ½ cup)
- ½ tsp. Salt

Instructions

1. In a large bowl, mix all the dry ingredients flour, sugar, anise, cinnamon, yeast, and salt. Add the warm water and coconut butter to the bowl and knead.
2. I use the hook attachment on my mixer at medium-low speed for 4-6 minutes or until the dough has come off the sides of the bowl and is stretchy but not sticky. If you don't have a mixer you can knead by hand for 10 minutes or until you reach the desired consistency.
3. Place dough in a lightly oiled bowl, cover with a kitchen towel and let rise for an hour.
4. To prepare your piloncillo, place it in a plastic bag, and crush it with the help of a hammer until finely ground.
5. Separate the crushed piloncillo un half. Place half of the piloncillo in a small bowl and mix with 1 tsp. Flour. This will be used to top the semitas before baking.
6. Once the dough is done rising, add the reaming half of the piloncillo, pecans, and orange zest and knead until all the ingredients are mixed evenly throughout.
7. Preheat oven to 350°F.
8. Divide the dough in four, roll the pieces tightly into rounds, and place on a sheet tray lined with parchment. Press down on the rounds lightly. Brush the rounds with your favorite plant milk, and top with the piloncillo and flour mixture. Press down slightly on the piloncillo topping with your hands.
9. Cover the sheet tray with a kitchen towel and let the dough rise for 20 minutes.
10. Bake for 20 minutes at 350°F.

Notes

- These semitas are the best when eaten still warm right out of the oven. If you eat them the next day be sure to warm them up before eating.
- You can use ½ whole wheat flour and half unbleached white flour to substitute the bread flour.
- The nuts and raisins are optional, but I think they add a special touch.
- You can substitute the coconut butter with vegan butter.
- You can use plant milk instead of water in the recipe, just make sure it's warm

⁷³ <https://dorastable.com/mexican-semita-bread-semitas-chorreadas/>

Kehillot haOlam: Passover

Lesson 3: Moroccan Passover

Goals

- To provide a broader understanding of Passover traditions in Moroccan culture.
- To help students cook items traditionally eaten during the Mimounah ceremony.

Essential Questions

- How do Moroccan Jews celebrate Passover?
- How do Moroccan Jews weave their unique exodus story into the Passover practices?
- How do Moroccan Jews commemorate the end of Passover?

Objectives (*Students will be able to...*)

- Compare and contrast the ways in which they celebrate Passover with that of the Moroccan Jewish community.
- Explain the significance of raising the Seder plate above people's heads in Moroccan Jewish culture.
- Celebrate the Mimounah ceremony.
- Articulate the connection between salt and the counting of the Omer in Moroccan Jewish culture.

Supplies:

- 1 Seder Plate:
 - Plate
 - Shank bone
 - Charoset
 - Horseradish
 - Hard-boiled egg
 - Parsley
 - Matzo
- Salt Shakers, 1 per student
 - Example: <https://amzn.to/345G4Tf>
- Salt (if the salt shakers are empty), enough to fill salt shakers
- Magazines
- Scissors, 1 per student
- Mod Podge glue, 1 jar for every 10 students
- Mod Podge paint brush sponges, 1 for every 2 students
- *Mufeleta* Ingredients (*makes 4-6 "pancakes"*)
 - 1½ cups warm water
 - 1 packet (2¼ tsp) active dry yeast
 - 1 tsp sugar
 - 4 cups all-purpose flour, plus more if needed
 - 1 tsp kosher salt
 - Oil as needed (sunflower, canola, or a neutral tasting oil)

Kehillot haOlam: Passover

Lesson 3: Moroccan Passover

- Moroccan Charoset Balls (*Makes 24 balls*)
 - ¾ cup walnuts, almonds or hazelnuts
 - 1½ cups pitted dates
 - ½ cup dried apricots
 - 2 or 3 dried figs
 - 1 cup raisins (dark, golden or any combination)
 - ½ teaspoon cinnamon
 - 1 or 2 pinches allspice
 - 1 to 2 tablespoons sweet red wine or grape juice
 - Finely ground walnuts or almonds (optional)
- Moroccan Stuffed Dates (*makes 12 dates*)
 - ¾ cup/100 g ground almonds
 - 3 Tbsp powdered sugar
 - 2 tsp orange flower water
 - Food coloring (optional)
 - 12 majhoul dates or other large, sweet date variety with pits
 - 12 walnut halves or 12 unsalted toasted almonds without skins
- Moroccan Mint Tea (*makes 6 servings*)
 - 1 tablespoon loose Chinese gunpowder green tea
 - 5 cups boiling water
 - 3 to 4 tablespoons sugar, or to taste
 - 1 large bunch fresh mint (1 ounce)
 - a 1- to 1 ½-quart teapot

Other Things to Prepare

- Copies of *Appendix A: Sefirot & the Seder Plate*, 1 per student
- (optional) 1 copy of *Appendix B: Body*
- Copies of *Appendix C: Mimouna Recipes*, 1 per student, stapled together.
- Copies of *Appendix D: Mimouna Proverbs Verses*, 1 per student

Kehillot haOlam: Passover

Lesson 3: Moroccan Passover

Set Induction

(5 minutes)

Begin by asking the students the following questions:

- ① What does freedom look like or feel like to you?
- ① What things make you feel like you are *not* free today?

Remind the students that Passover celebrates the Jews' freedom from slavery. While we are free today, there are various groups of Jews who had to endure their own version of the Exodus story as they immigrated to Israel or other areas so they could be free. As a result, this theme of freedom is on the forefront of many Passover practices.

Activity 1: Seder Plate Over Head

(25 minutes)

Explain that in the Moroccan Jewish community, before the Maggid section (telling of the Exodus story), they raise a Seder plate and pass it over the heads of each person at the table. As they do this, they recite the words "*bibhilu yasanu mi-misrayim, halahma 'anya bene horin*" which means: "In haste we went out of Egypt [with our] bread of affliction [now we are] free people."

It is believed that Rabbi Isaac Luria, who is known for revolutionizing the study of Jewish mysticism through Kabbalah, connected the various items of the Seder to the 10 Kabbalistic *sefirot* (mystical dimensions which described the divine attributes of God) and so the Seder plate became a sacred symbol of God. In this sense, when raising the Seder plate, one is being blessed by [God.]⁷⁴

Pass out copies of *Appendix A: Sefirot & the Seder Plate*. Read it together as a class, summarizing along the way. As it is read have a student rearrange the items on the Seder plate to symbolize the parts of the body that they correspond do. If needed, use the cut out of a body on *Appendix B: Body*.

With the Seder plate rearranged, place the Seder plate above each student's head (one by one) and recite the following phrase:

"bibhilu yasanu mi-misrayim, halahma 'anya bene horin"

The student should then respond with:

"In haste we went out of Egypt [with our] bread of affliction [now we are] free people."

⁷⁴ <https://www.myjewishlearning.com/jewish-and/moroccan-passover-traditions-recipe/>

Kehillot haOlam: Passover

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Activity 2: Counting the Omer Salt

(15 minutes)

Begin by ask students to share what they already know about the counting of the Omer.

Then explain that the *omer* refers to the 49-day period between the second night of Passover and the holiday of *Shavuot*. This period marks the beginning of the barley harvest when, in ancient times, Jews would bring the first sheaves to the Temple as a means of thanking God for the harvest. The word *omer* literally means “sheaf” and refers to these early offerings.

We read about this in Leviticus 23:15-16:

“You shall count from the eve of the second day of Pesach, when an omer of grain is to be brought as an offering, seven complete weeks. The day after the seventh week of your counting will make fifty days, and you shall present a new meal offering to God.”

In the Moroccan Jewish community, packets of salt are distributed to congregants on the second night of Passover, marking the first counting of the Omer. The significance of salt includes the commemoration of the sacrifices in the Temple and as an adaptation of a Kabbalistic tradition:

There is a custom of the Kabbalists to hold in their right hand a “little salt”. This action sweetens the period of the Omer since it acts as a protection shield in a number of ways. Historically, many tragedies befell our people during this period. During these days of mourning some Jews don't: hold weddings, listen to instrumental music, buy a significantly valuable garment, cut their hair or shave.

Also, the Hebrew word for salt is *Melach*, which has the same root letters as the word for “war.” So, salt acts as a vaccine against war during this time. ⁷⁵

Hand eat student a salt shaker. If there is not already salt in it, fill it with salt. Explain that this is the salt that they can use on their food specifically during the counting of the Omer (starting the 2nd night of Passover) for reasons mentioned above.

Using the magazines, they should search for symbols of things or words that remind them of “freedom.” They can be as creative as they would like and can interpret “freedom” in whatever way feels meaningful to them. Using the Mod Podge glue and sponge paint brushes, they will glue the images/words that they find in the magazines onto the outside of the salt shaker.

Remind students not to cover the top of the salt shaker so that the salt can come out.

Activity 3: Mimounah

(45 minutes)

As Jews around the world conclude the observance of Passover, many rush to pizza parlors to fill their stomachs with delightfully leavened food. But Jews of North African descent take the

⁷⁵ Adapted from: <http://www.yeshshem.com/kabbalah-purim-pesach-omer-shavuot-10.htm>

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party to a whole new level, with the observance of Mimouna, a feast and celebration, with festive dress, special foods and music.

Mimouna is a traditional festival celebrated by Moroccan Jews at nightfall on the last day of Passover and throughout the following day until sundown. Families open their homes to the public as they host a celebration involving family, friends, neighbors, and food. A family's kitchen table features many different cuisines including assorted fruits, vegetables, eggs, cakes, sweet meats, milk and wine, butter, honey, jams, and the popular pastry called Mufleta. Since the celebration coincides with the last day of Passover breads, cakes and leavened breads previously prohibited from being eaten during Passover are particularly present in the celebration. Mimouna is a time to celebrate luck and good fortune as well as the start of the spring season. Foods eaten symbolize fertility, joy, abundance, success, health, and prosperity. ⁷⁶

The celebration is Open-Door– the host open their house for all to come in and eat and relax together. The door of the house is literally open for all and everyone is greeted with “*TIRVAHU VE TISADO*”. The original translation means “May you succeed and help others to success”, but today it is translated to “success and eat together” and therefore the event has become a mini-feast... The celebration starts on the evening of the last day of Passover and continues the next day throughout the whole day.

Break the class into three groups. Group 1 will make Mufleta; Group 2 will make Moroccan Charoset Balls, and Group 3 will make Moroccan Tea and Stuffed Dates.

Hand each group the respective supplies with the recipe from *Appendix C: Mimounah*. Spend time making each item so that everyone in the group can get a taste. Then partake in your own Mimounah feast!

Closure

(5 minutes)

Explain that following the evening services at the end of Passover, Moroccan Jews have the custom of reading certain verses in honor of the Mimouna festival. The verses are from the book of Proverbs and captured the spirit of the holiday.

Pass out copies of *Appendix D: Mimouna Verses from Proverbs*, to each student. Ask for a volunteer to read them out loud. Then, ask the students the following questions:

- ① Which of these verses speaks to you the most and why?
- ① How can you incorporate these teachings into your daily lives and/or your Passover practice?

⁷⁶ <https://globaljews.org/blog/mimouna-taking-the-end-of-passover-to-whole-new-level/>

Sefirot & the Seder Plate ⁷⁷

In a self-contained and rigid paradigm of cause and affect, action/reaction, freedom is merely an illusion, a deception of what truly is. Yet, as we sit down to the Seder on Passover night, we aspire and dream of freedom, genuine freedom—what existentialists would call “radical freedom”—where we choose “just because: uninfluenced and non-reactive. But is this freedom truly attainable? Is not every choice determined by a previous choice?

Before we begin reciting the haggadah, which speaks of freedom, we ensure that we are prepared for the experience, so that later on we are able to integrate the experience of ‘beyond order’ in real time, within the workings of ‘order’ and the natural flow of life.

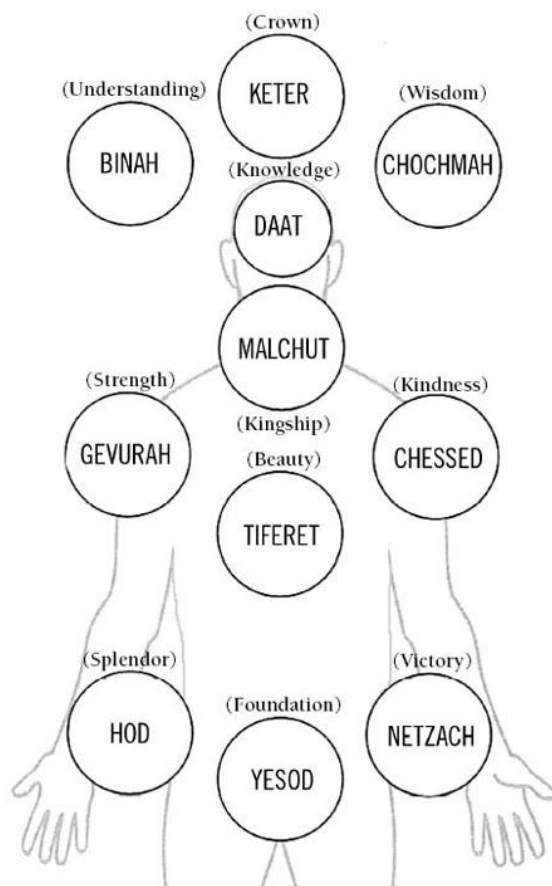
Initially there was and is only “*or ein sof*—the endless light,” absolute oneness and unity. Thus, finite creative reality as we know it, and as we understand it to be, couldn’t have merged. To create otherness and apparent separation there was a great *tzimtzum*—contraction and concealment of the *ein sof* within itself—and finite came into focus. The first otherness that took shape was “formed” as an *igul*—circle. The image is of a circular space in which all potential reality was contained within as one, non-individuated, and non-distinct, no beginning and no end. Within the circle a line was formed with distinct points and an up-and-down sequential structure with a clear beginning and a definite end.

These original points are the ten *sefirot*, and it is through these ten screens of *sefirot* that the infinite light of the *ein sof* penetrates our reality. The distinct ‘formed,’ ‘shaped’ and ‘colored’ sefirot serve as curtains or colored containers through which the infinite colorless, formless, unified light is reflected into our world, albeit in a way that it seems differentiated and colored.

First there are the three intellectual sefirot; **chochmah** (wisdom), **binah** (understanding), and **da’at** (knowledge).

Next are the three primary ‘internal emotions’; on the right expansive column is **hesed** (kindness). On the left restrictive column is **gevurah** (strength). In the middle is their synthesis, **tiferet** (beauty). —The idea of the ‘giver’ giving with a sensitivity of how much the ‘receiver’ could and needs to receive.

The ‘outer’ emotions are also divided into three: on the right expansive column is **netzah** (victory). On the left column is **hod** (splendor), and in the middle is the unifying agent, connecting the ‘giver’ and the ‘receiver,’ the idea of **yesod** (foundation).



⁷⁷ Adapted from: <https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/meditations-on-the-seder-plate/>

Passover Lesson 3: Moroccan Passover

Appendix A

Malchut (kingship) is receptiveness, as it represents the vessel that receives from the preceding nine sefirot and re-channels the energies downward, thus becoming the ‘crown’ for the subsequent *partzuf* (structure of sefirot).

We first take hold of an *igul* (circle), as in a round *seder* plate, and begin by placing three *matzot* one on top of the next. The three *matzot* represent the three intellectual *sefirot*: *chochmah*, *binah* and *da’at*, as the consumption of wheat is connected with our intellectual and discerning development. In the words of the Talmud, “a child does not know how to call ‘father’ and ‘mother’ until it has had a taste of wheat.”

Next we arrange six items of food in two upside-down triangles, the triangles reflecting internal and outer emotions respectively. Collectively these six items represent six points of light, the six emotional *sefirot*.

On the upper right side of the plate the *zeroah* (shank bone) is arranged. The Hebrew word *zeroah* reminds us of the *zeroah netuya* (the outstretched arm), the divine *hesed* (loving kindness) that was shown to us, that brought us our salvation. On the opposite side, on the upper left column we place the *beitza* (egg). The egg is a traditional food of mourning, as the oval shape represents the circle of life with its ups and downs.

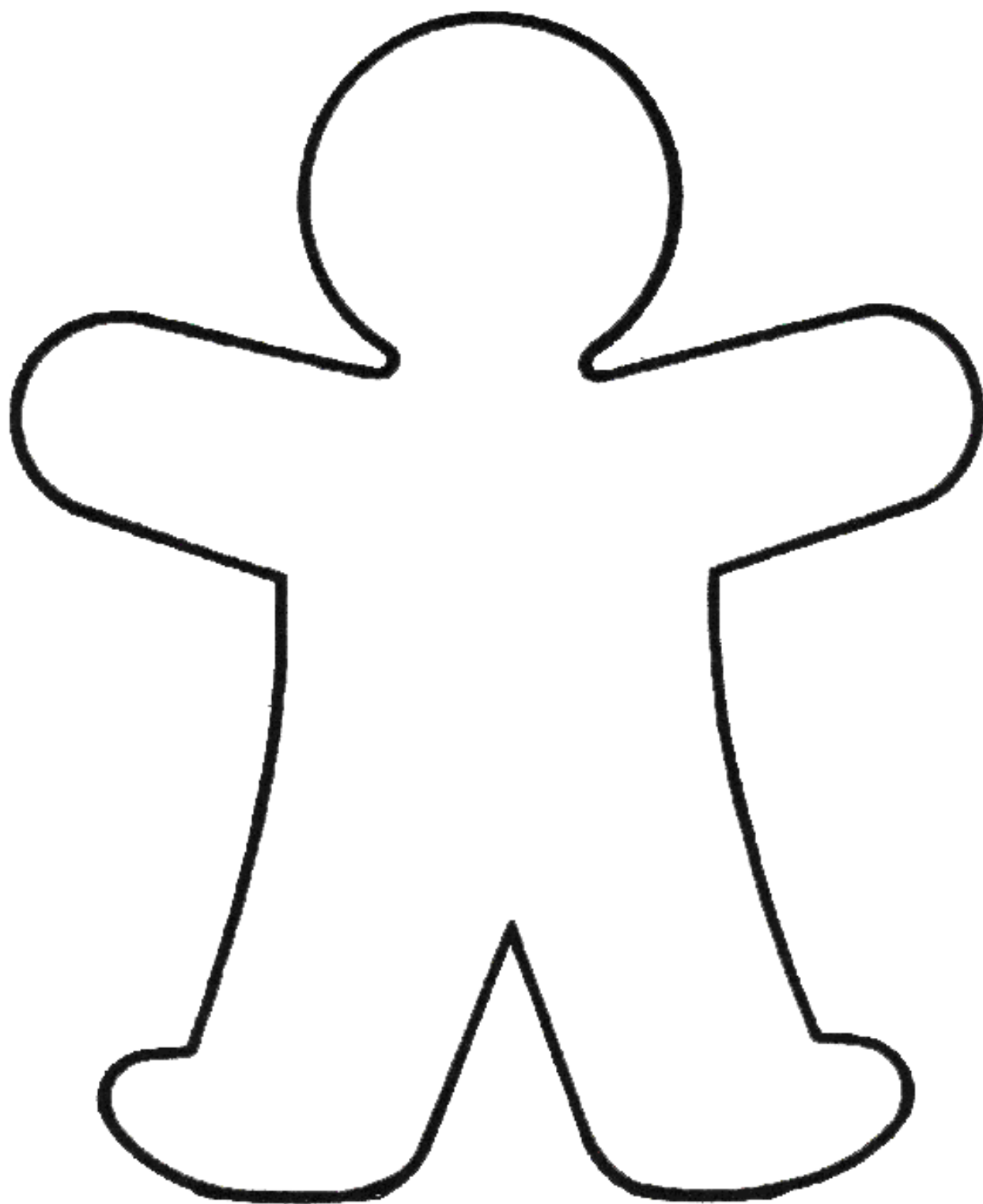
The egg is associated with (*gevurah*) restraint and restriction, a time of loss, when there is a concealment of apparent kindness. In the middle, at the third point of the triangle, (*maror*) bitter herbs are arranged reflecting the attribute of *tiferet* (mercy and compassion). Becoming aware of our own spiritual condition may arouse a bitterness within and provoke divine compassion. When we, through external stimuli feel pain we awaken our own ability to be empathetic to others who are truly in pain.

Next we arrange the lower triangle, reflecting the outer emotional *sefirot*. On the lower right column we place the *haroset*, which is a mixture of various fruits crushed into a liquid like form. The *haroset* corresponds to the *sefira* of *netzah*, as the *haroset* is comprised of fruits of trees, growing tall and mighty, mirroring the energy of confidence and perseverance. Across, on the lower left column we arrange the *karpas*, a vegetable, either an onion or potato.

The *karpas* reflects the idea of *hod* (humility), as vegetables, in contrast to fruit, grow within or in close proximity to the earth. In fact, in the word *karpas* one can find the words *caf* (palm) and *ras* (poor), the hand of the poor open to receive in its humility. In the lower middle column the *hazeret* is placed. The *hazeret* is the bitter herbs that will be eventually used in the Hillel sandwich. *Hazeret* reflects the *sefira* of *yesod*, the connecting force, that which binds together, as the *hazeret* is sensitive and will unify the entire internal structure of the *seder*, bringing together freedom and exile, affliction and salvation, unifying the *matzah*—the bread of liberation—with the *maror*, which represents our suffering and pain.

All the above is placed on the actual plate, which is *malchut*, the vessel and container of all the points of light.

Having arranged the items in their appropriate locations, securing that ‘order’ is in place, we can now be on our journey towards radical infinite freedom, attaining this awesome power by revealing the infinity which is beyond ‘worlds’, beyond the worlds of actualization, formation or creation, and allowing for the manifestation of, in the words of the Haggadah, “I, and not an angel...I, and not a seraph...I, and not a messenger, but I Hashem.”



Passover Lesson 3: Moroccan Passover

Appendix C

Mufeleta ⁷⁸ (Makes 4-6 Servings)

Ingredients

- 1½ cups warm water
- 1 packet (2¼ tsp) active dry yeast
- 1 tsp sugar
- 4 cups all-purpose flour, plus more if needed
- 1 tsp kosher salt
- Oil as needed (sunflower, canola, or a neutral tasting oil)

Directions

1. Combine the yeast and sugar with the warm water, make sure the water is not too hot or too cold, or your yeast won't properly activate. Allow the yeast to get foamy and bubbly, about five minutes.
2. Combine the flour and salt together.
3. Make a well in the flour, and then add the water and yeast mixture. Using your hands, incorporate the water into the flour. The amount of flour you need can depend on the brand of the flour as well as the humidity/temperature in your kitchen. You want the dough to be slightly tacky to the touch, but it shouldn't stick to your hands. If you find your dough is too sticky, add a little more flour as needed.
4. Once the dough is formed into a ball, knead the dough until smooth and elastic, about 5 mins.
5. Lightly grease the bowl with oil, and then place the dough into the bowl. Cover the bowl with a damp, clean dish towel and allow to rise for 40 minutes. Some folks form their dough into balls before letting it rise, and some prefer to do it after.
6. Generously drizzle a baking sheet or pyrex with more oil. Pull off golfball-sized rounds of dough and form them into balls. Roll them in the oil and then let them rest for about 5 mins.
7. Form one round of dough into a paper-thin circle, about 10" in diameter. You want each layer to be as thin as possible, and you can do this by flattening and pressing the dough into a circle shape with your fingers, or with the help of a rolling pin. Don't worry if a few small holes pop up here and there.
8. Over medium heat, add a few teaspoons of oil to a large nonstick or castiron skillet. Place the first round of formed dough into the skillet. Turn down the heat slightly at this point and cook the mufeleta over medium low, so that it doesn't burn. Allow the mufeleta to turn golden brown, and then flip it onto the other side. This is the only layer that will get browned on both sides.
9. While the first side is browning, form the next layer of dough. Once you flip the first layer of the mufeleta over, place the raw formed dough round on top of that cooked layer. Form another round of dough while the next layer is browning.
10. Once golden brown, flip again and place another layer of raw dough on the top browned side of the mufeleta while the bottom cooks. You can add a little more oil to the pan after each flip. Continue this process for as long as you can manage to flip the pile of layers. If the stack gets too big to flip, remove the entire stack, and begin a new one.
11. Serve warm with melted butter and honey!



⁷⁸ <https://www.myjewishlearning.com/the-nosher/moroccan-mufeleta-recipe/>

Moroccan Charoset Balls 79
(Makes 24 balls)

Ingredients

- ¾ cup walnuts, almonds or hazelnuts
- 1½ cups pitted dates
- ½ cup dried apricots
- 2 or 3 dried figs
- 1 cup raisins (dark, golden or any combination)
- ½ teaspoon cinnamon
- 1 or 2 pinches allspice
- 1 to 2 tablespoons sweet red wine or grape juice
- Finely ground walnuts or almonds (optional)

Directions

1. Using a food processor, pulse to coarsely chop the nuts, then add all the rest of the ingredients except the wine and finely ground nuts.
2. Pulse until the mixture is finely chopped and well blended, adding just enough wine as you are pulsing to make the mixture stick together. Too much and it will be too sticky. As you pulse it, the mixture will form a large ball.
3. Now you are ready to roll. Very slightly dampen hands with cold water.
4. Gently roll the mixture into balls about ¾ inches in diameter or your desired size.
5. Place the balls on a tray or baking sheet covered in wax paper and refrigerate until firm, about 3 hours. Serve or store in a covered container.
6. Or you can roll each ball in finely ground nuts, which will keep them from sticking together so they can be stored immediately in a covered container.



Passover Lesson 3: Moroccan Passover

Appendix C

Moroccan Stuffed Dates ⁸⁰ (Makes 12 stuffed Dates)

Ingredients

- 3/4 cup/100 g ground almonds
- 3 Tbsp powdered sugar
- 2 tsp orange flower water
- Food coloring (optional)
- 12 mejhoul dates or other large, sweet date variety with pits
- 12 walnut halves or 12 unsalted toasted almonds without skins



Directions

1. In a mixing bowl, add the ground almonds, powdered sugar, and orange flower water.
2. Add 1 Tbsp water and work into a paste.
3. The dough should be slightly moist; add a few more drops of water (or orange flower water) if needed.
4. If using food coloring, divide the paste into even parts, add 5 or 6 drops of a single color to each, and work in.
5. Wipe the dates with a damp cloth.
6. Cut a lengthwise incision across the top of each date and carefully remove the pit.
7. Take 1 tsp or so of the almond paste, roll it between your palms into a spherical shape, and tuck inside the date. It should bulge out of the opening.
8. Repeat with the remaining paste and dates.
9. Garnish each date with a walnut pressed slightly edgewise into the almond paste before serving.
10. Enjoy!

⁸⁰ <https://www.epicurious.com/recipes/food/views/stuffed-dates-51173800>

Moroccan Mint Tea ⁸¹
(Makes 6 Servings)

Ingredients

- 1 tablespoon loose Chinese gunpowder green tea
- 5 cups boiling water
- 3 to 4 tablespoons sugar, or to taste
- 1 large bunch fresh mint (1 ounce)
- a 1- to 1 1/2-quart teapot

Directions

1. Put tea in teapot and pour in 1 cup boiling water, then swirl gently to warm pot and rinse tea.
2. Strain out and discard water, reserving tea leaves in pot.
3. Add remaining 4 cups boiling water to tea and let steep 2 minutes.
4. Stir in sugar (to taste) and mint sprigs and steep 3 to 4 minutes more.
5. Serve in small heatproof glasses.



⁸¹ <https://www.epicurious.com/recipes/food/views/moroccan-mint-tea-238428>

Mimouna Verses ⁸²

*The proverbs of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel.
(Proverbs 1:1)*

*So shall you find favor and good understanding in the sight of God and man.
Trust in Adonai with all your heart; and do not rely on your own understanding.
(Proverbs 3:4-5)*

*It is the blessing of Adonai that enriches, and no toil can increase it.
(Proverbs 10:22)*

*Entrust your works unto Adonai, and your plans shall succeed.
(Proverbs 16:3)*

*He who strives to do good and kind deeds attains life, success, and honor.
(Proverbs 21:21)*

*He who tends to the fig tree shall eat its fruit,
and he who cares for his master will be honored.
(Proverbs 27:18)*

*The name of Adonai is a strong tower: the righteous man runs into it and is safe.
(Proverbs 18:10)*

*For through me your days will increase, and years be added to your life.
(Proverbs 9:11)*

*Blessed be God forever, amen and amen.
(Psalm 89)*

⁸² Adapted from: <http://archive.jewishagency.org/mimouna/content/37171> and Sefaria.com

Kehillot haOlam: Passover

Lesson 4: Mizrahi Passover

Goals

- To provide a broader understanding of Passover traditions in Mizrahi culture.

Essential Questions

- How do Mizrahi Jews celebrate Passover?
- How do Mizrahi Jews weave their unique story into their Passover practices?

Objectives (*Students will be able to...*)

- Compare and contrast the ways in which they celebrate Passover with that of the Mizrahi Jewish community.
- Explain the significance of hitting each other with green onions in Persian Jewish culture.
- Compare and contrast different kinds of Charoset recipes.
- Articulate the importance of the *Haft Seen* table as an end to Passover.

Supplies:

- Green onions, 1 per student
- Persian Charoset
 - 1 cup raisins
 - 1/2 cup chopped walnuts
 - 1 cup dates (soaked and pitted)
 - 1 cup sesame seeds
 - 1/2 cup unsalted almonds
 - 1/2 unsalted pistachios
 - 1/2 to 1 cup red wine
- Libyan Charoset
 - 1 apple, peeled, cored and quartered (I recommend a tart Granny Smith, to counter the sweetness)
 - 1/3 cup each walnuts, almonds and hazelnuts
 - 3/4 cup dates, pitted
 - 1/2 orange (peel included, seeds removed if visible)
 - 1/4 cup grape juice
 - 1/8 tsp cinnamon
 - 1/4 tsp ground cardamom
 - 1/4 tsp ground nutmeg
- Iraqi Charoset
 - 2 1/2 cups walnuts
 - 1/2 cup date syrup (can be found in Middle Eastern Markets)
 - 1 to 2 tbsp lemon juice, to taste
- 3 food processors
- *Haft Seen* table items

Kehillot haOlam: Passover

Lesson 4: Mizrahi Passover

- Green grown sprouts
- *Samanu* (sweet pudding): <https://www.amazon.com/Sadaf-Samanoo-Wheat-Sprout-Spread/dp/B07NF5BYCV>
- *senjed* (dried fruit of the oleaster tree): <https://www.amazon.com/Dried-Senjed-0-5oz-Pack-3/dp/B00U58PP16>
- Garlic
- Apples
- *Sumac* (spice)
- Vinegar
- Hyacinths
- Goldfish (real or fake/edible)
- Candles
- Coins
- Hard boiled eggs, 1 per student, peeled
- 1 dozen eggs (for decorating)
- Egg Decorating Kit
- Small table tents
- Markers
- Plates, 1 per student
- Napkins

Other Things to Prepare:

- Copies of *Appendix A: Dayeinu*, 1 per student
- Copies of *Appendix B: Charošet*, 1 per student
- If you choose not to buy pre-boiled eggs, boil enough eggs so that each student can have 1. Make sure to peel them so they are ready to eat and so that you do not confuse them with the eggs that the students will be decorating.

Kehillot haOlam: Passover

Lesson 4: Mizrahi Passover

Set Induction

(10 minutes)

Begin by asking the students to share their favorite Passover memory. In doing so, really challenge them to delve into why it was their favorite. Was it because of the people there? Was it because it was interactive and silly? Was it because it was different or unique in some way?

After everyone has shared, see if they can identify some themes that came up. If anyone brought up ideas that they will be exploring today (i.e. food related memories), note that out loud.

Activity 1: Dayeinu Review

(15 minutes)

Review the idea of “Dayeinu” with the students by asking:

- ❓ What does Dayeinu mean?
 - “It would have been enough”
- ❓ What is “Dayeinu” in reference to?
 - The 15 gifts and miracles bestowed upon the Jewish people by God in the Book of Exodus. The idea that each blessing would be enough on its own, even without further or more profound blessings, is a central theme of Passover.

Pass out copies of *Appendix A: Dayeinu* to each student. Have a volunteer read the text out loud. Then ask the students:

- ❓ If you had to rank these miracles, which ones would be in your top 3 and why?

Activity 2: Green onions

(5 minutes)

"Dayeinu" is sung throughout the Diaspora during the Seder, but Sephardic and Mizrahi Jews from Iran and Afghanistan have a particularly lively custom in which they whip each other with oversize scallions. Before the song begins, each Seder participant stands, takes a scallion, and starts whacking the other members of the feast. In some families, one scallion is passed around the table while each person takes a turn whipping. There is some debate about where the custom originates. Many believe it is a way to mimic the whips of slave drivers in Egypt. But others say it's a reference to Bamidbar 11:5-6, a passage that describes the Israelites' longing for Egyptian onions while eating manna during their 40 years wandering in the desert. ⁸³

⁸³

http://content.time.com/time/specials/packages/article/0,28804,2065531_2065534_2065848,00.html

Kehillot haOlam: Passover

Lesson 4: Mizrahi Passover

Seder participants whip each other as a way to scold one another for desiring any aspect of their lives of enslavement. Hand each student 1-2 green onions. Without letting it get out of hand, sing Dayeinu as a group (see *Appendix A: Dayeinu*) as each person LIGHTLY hits the person next to them with the green onion. If they would like, they are allowed to eat 1 green onion.

Activity 2: Charoset Tasting

(30 minutes)

Begin by reviewing what elements you typically use in charoset.

- Apples
- Cinnamon
- Some kind of nut(s): walnuts, cashews, peanuts, etc.
- Some kind of sweetener/dried fruit: dates, sugar, raisins
- Some kind of juice: wine, grape juice, orange juice, pomegranate juice

Persian Charoset, often called *helayk*, adds a unique element: dates. Just as apples are the main ingredient in the European version of charoset, dates are a staple in the Arab world, and so they are found in nearly every Mizrahi recipe. Jews from the East are also more likely to use fruits mentioned in the Bible, so figs and raisins are also common. While cinnamon is commonly used in Arab versions, many more spices are likely to be found with it, like cardamom, ginger and nutmeg. The consistency is also different. While the apple and walnuts version doesn't much resemble a paste, Mizrahi versions hold together much better.⁸⁴

For more information on Persian Charoset, check out the footnote below.

There are many different types of charoset within the Mizrahi Jewish community. Break the class into 3, giving each a recipe from *Appendix B: Charoset Recipes*.

The first is from the Nooromid family, an Iranian family that now resides in Atlanta, GA. The second is from Dalia Sirkin, a San Jose State professor in English Literature, who was born in Libya; and the third is from Simcha Canoush whose family is from Baghdad, Iraq.

Have each group make one of the charoset recipes. When they are done, allow everyone to test these different variations and compare them using these questions:

- ⊕ What makes each of these charoset recipes unique from one another? How are they similar? How are they different?

⁸⁴ <https://www.kqed.org/bayareabites/94355/bored-of-apples-and-walnuts-try-adding-date-charoset-to-your-passover-table-this-year>

Kehillot haOlam: Passover

Lesson 4: Mizrahi Passover

- 🕒 Which one was your favorite and why?
- 🕒 What can you understand about the Mizrahi community based on the ingredients used in each of these recipes

Activity 3: *Haft Seen* Table

(25 minutes)

Begin by asking students:

- 🕒 How do you typically end Passover?
- 🕒 What foods do you eat to “break” Passover?
 - Pizza, pasta, etc.

Persian Jews have lived in the Middle East for two-and-a-half millennia. As a result, they have adopted many of their countrymen’s customs and merged them with their own, rich, Jewish traditions. One of the best examples of this Persian-Jewish fusion is when Nowruz (the Iranian new year) and Passover intersect.

Persian Jews mark the end of Passover, known as *Shab-e Sal*, with a meal composed of dairy products featuring a variety of yogurt and herb dishes. The day after the end of Passover, known as *Ruz-e Sal*, as well as the last day of Nowruz celebrations, known as *sizdah bedar*, are both spent in the outdoors and close to nature.

The Nowruz traditional table setting, known as the *haft seen*, is the center of the new year celebrations. Seven symbolic items, all beginning with the Farsi letter sheen, are placed on the table: *sabze* (green grown sprouts); *samanu* (sweet pudding); *senjed* (dried fruit of the oleaster tree); *seer* (garlic); *seeb* (apples); *sumac* (spice); and *serkeh* (vinegar). Also, colorful painted eggs, coins, fragrant hyacinths, goldfish and candles decorate the traditional spread.⁸⁵

- 🕒 What do these symbolic foods remind you of?
 - Passover Seder items
- 🕒 Why do you think eggs and dairy are so important in this celebration?
 - Just like for Passover, they are a sign of spring and new life.

Each item begins with the letter sin (s) in Persian, and each item is a symbol of spring and renewal, including:

⁸⁵ <https://www.jpost.com/opinion/dont-pass-over-a-persian-passover-585679>

Kehillot haOlam: Passover

Lesson 4: Mizrahi Passover

- *Seeb* (apple), representing beauty
- *Seer* (garlic), representing good health
- *Serkeh* (vinegar), representing patience
- *Sonbol* (hyacinth), representing spring
- *Samanu* (sweet pudding), representing fertility
- *Sabzeh* (sprouts), representing rebirth
- *Sekeh* (coins), representing prosperity ⁸⁶

Create a *Haft Seen* table as a class. Break your students into 3 groups:

- **Group 1** will set the table with each of the items so that it looks nice and presentable. They can use their phones to google “*Haft Seen* Table” for inspiration.
- **Group 2** will decorate place cards with the name of each item and what it symbolizes. For example: “Seeb (apple) = beauty.”
- **Group 3** will decorate the eggs using the uncooked eggs and egg decorating kit.

When they are done, allow them to grab a bite of each edible item (including each taking a hard-boiled egg) while they finish the day with a closing discussion.

Closure

(10 minutes)

- ❓ How is this Persian celebration similar to and different from Passover?
- ❓ Could you see yourself incorporating any of these items into your own Passover practice in some way? Which ones and why?
- ❓ How does this custom resemble your understanding of Easter? How does it feel to be combining these seemingly very different customs?

⁸⁶ <https://www.npr.org/sections/thesalt/2016/03/20/471174857/nowruz-persian-new-years-table-celebrates-spring-deliciously>

Dayeinu

TRANSLITERATION	ENGLISH
Day dayenu (4x)	<i>Chorus: It would have been enough...</i>
Verse 1: Ilu ilu hotzianu, hotzianu miMitzrayim Velo asa vahem shfatim	<u>Verse 1:</u> If God had brought us out from Egypt, and had not carried out judgments against them
Day dayenu (4x)	<i>Chorus: It would have been enough...</i>
<u>Verse 2:</u> Ilu asa vahem shfatim velo asa veloheihem Velo asa veloheihem	<u>Verse 2:</u> If God had carried out judgments against them, and not against their idols
Day dayenu (4x)	<i>Chorus: It would have been enough...</i>
<u>Verse 3:</u> Ilu asa veloheihem velo harag bechoreihem Velo harag bechoreihem	<u>Verse 3:</u> If God had destroyed their idols, and had not smitten their first-born
Day dayenu (4x)	<i>Chorus: It would have been enough...</i>
<u>Verse 4:</u> Ilu harag bechoreihem velo natan lanu et mamonom Velo natan lanu et mamonom	<u>Verse 4:</u> If God had smitten their first-born, and had not given us their wealth
Day dayenu (4x)	<i>Chorus: It would have been enough...</i>
<u>Verse 5:</u> Ilu natan lanu et mamonom velo kara lanu et hayam Velo kara lanu et hayam	<u>Verse 5:</u> If God had given us their wealth, and had not split the sea for us
Day dayenu (4x)	<i>Chorus: It would have been enough...</i>
<u>Verse 6:</u> Ilu kara lanu et hayam velo he'eviranu betocho becharava Velo he'eviranu betocho becharava	<u>Verse 6:</u> If God had split the sea for us, and had not taken us through it on dry land
Day dayenu (4x)	<i>Chorus: It would have been enough...</i>
<u>Verse 7:</u> Ilu he'eviranu betocho becharava velo shika tzarenu betocho Velo shika tzarenu betocho	<u>Verse 7:</u> If God had taken us through the sea on dry land, and had not drowned our oppressors in it
Day dayenu (4x)	<i>Chorus: It would have been enough...</i>

Passover Lesson 4: Mizrahi Passover

Appendix A

<p><u>Verse 8:</u> Ilu shika tzarenu betocho velo sipek tzarchenu bamidbar Arbaim shana</p> <p>Day dayenu (4x)</p> <p><u>Verse 9:</u> Ilu sipek tzarchenu bamidbar arbaim shana Velo he'echilanu et haman</p> <p>Day dayenu (4x)</p> <p><u>Verse 10:</u> Ilu he'echilanu et haman velo natan lanu et haShabbat Velo natan lanu et haShabbat</p> <p>Day dayenu (4x)</p> <p><u>Verse 11:</u> Ilu natan lanu et haShabbat velo kervanu lifne Har Sinai Velo kervanu lifne har sinai</p> <p>Day dayenu (4x)</p> <p><u>Verse 12:</u> Ilu kervanu lifne Har Sinai velo natan lanu et haTorah Velo natan lanu et haTorah</p> <p>Day dayenu (4x)</p> <p><u>Verse 13:</u> Ilu natan lanu et haTorah velo hichnisanu l'erezt Yisrael Velo hichnisanu l'erezt Yisrael</p> <p>Day dayenu (4x)</p> <p><u>Verse 14:</u> Ilu hichnisanu l'erezt Yisrael velo bana lanu et Beit Habechira Velo bana lanu et Beit Habechira</p> <p>Day dayenu (4x)</p>	<p><u>Verse 8:</u> If God had drowned our oppressors in it, and had not supplied our needs in the desert for forty years</p> <p><i>Chorus: It would have been enough...</i></p> <p><u>Verse 9:</u> If God had supplied our needs in the desert for forty years, and had not fed us the manna</p> <p><i>Chorus: It would have been enough...</i></p> <p><u>Verse 10:</u> If God had fed us the manna, and had not given us the Shabbat</p> <p><i>Chorus: It would have been enough...</i></p> <p><u>Verse 11:</u> If God had given us the Shabbat, and had not brought us before Mount Sinai</p> <p><i>Chorus: It would have been enough...</i></p> <p><u>Verse 12:</u> If God had brought us before Mount Sinai, and had not given us the Torah</p> <p><i>Chorus: It would have been enough...</i></p> <p><u>Verse 13:</u> If God had given us the Torah, and had not brought us into the land of Israel</p> <p><i>Chorus: It would have been enough...</i></p> <p><u>Verse 14:</u> If God had brought us into the land of Israel, and not built for us the Holy Temple</p> <p><i>Chorus: It would have been enough...</i></p>
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Nooromid Family Persian Charoset ⁸⁷

Passover is one of Iranian Jewish nutritionist and founder of Nooromid Nutrition Consulting Group, Safa Nooromid's favorite Jewish holidays because of the traditions and memories she recalls practicing in Iran.

Every year Nooromid prepares a Persian rendition of charoset that uses ingredients commonly found in the Middle East, such as dates, raisins and pistachios. The ingredients help give the charoset its paste like consistency, rich color and taste and are a main staple for many Sephardic dishes.

Nooromid's charoset recipe is great twist for anyone eager to incorporate Middle Eastern flavors into a seder this year.

Ingredients

- 1 cup raisins
- ½ cup chopped walnuts
- 1 cup dates (soaked and pitted)
- 1 cup sesame seeds
- ½ cup unsalted almonds
- ½ unsalted pistachios
- ½ to 1 cup red wine



Directions

1. It is very important to chop and paste each item individually and to chop your dry ingredients first. Soak the pitted dates for several hours.
2. Chop the almonds, walnuts and pistachios in the blender.
3. Empty the blender, then chop the sesame seeds in the blender until they are pasty.
4. Remove the sesame seeds, and repeat the process with the raisins in the blender until they are pasty.
5. Finally, place the soaked dates in the blender and chop until pasty.
6. Add all the chopped ingredients back to blender, add the red wine, and blend for a few minutes until they are mixed well.
7. If your product is very thick, you can add more wine, grape juice, or water and blend to your desired consistency.

⁸⁷ <https://atlantajewishtimes.timesofisrael.com/recipe-for-persian-charoset/>

Dalia Sirkin's Libyan Charoset ⁸⁸

San Jose State English Literature professor Dalia Sirkin was born in Libya, and came to the United States via Italy. Her mother was among those that rolled the charoset into balls for serving.

Sirkin, who lives in Menlo Park, begins by peeling and grating an apple (this can be done in the food processor.) Then she adds the nuts; she usually uses a combination of walnuts, almonds and hazelnuts. Dates are once again the main fruit here, and she also adds a splash of grape juice and half an orange.

"The different liquids give it better texture and helps blend the flavors," she said. "I really go by taste, I keep on tasting until I find the texture is what I want, and the taste has all the flavors I want."

When it comes to spices, Sirkin uses cinnamon, but only the tiniest amount, since it can easily overpower everything else. She also uses cardamom, and lots of freshly grated nutmeg.

Ingredients:

- 1 apple, peeled, cored and quartered (I recommend a tart Granny Smith, to counter the sweetness)
- 1/3 cup each walnuts, almonds and hazelnuts
- 3/4 cup dates, pitted
- 1/2 orange (peel included, seeds removed if visible)
- 1/4 cup grape juice
- 1/8 tsp cinnamon
- 1/4 tsp ground cardamom
- 1/4 tsp ground nutmeg



Instructions:

1. Shred the apple using a food processor or a box grater.
2. Pulse the nuts in the food processor until ground into small pieces.
3. Add the apple, dates, orange, and grape juice. Pulse until it forms a paste (nuts should still be in small pieces; consistency shouldn't be entirely smooth.)
4. Put into a bowl, and stir in spices.

⁸⁸ <https://www.kqed.org/bayareabites/94355/bored-of-apples-and-walnuts-try-adding-date-charoset-to-your-passover-table-this-year>

Simcha Canoush's Iraqi Charoset (*Heleyk*) ⁸⁹

Simcha Canoush lives in the West Portal section of San Francisco. Her family lived in Baghdad for centuries, and she comes from a long line of rabbis. Her family left Iraq in 1951 for Israel, and she came to the Bay Area in the 70s.

Rather than called charoset, in Iraq it's called helayk. To make it, dates were simmered in hot water until soft, and then the liquid was pushed through cheese cloth. Walnuts would then be pounded in a sack with a hammer into pieces, and mixed together with the dates.

Now, of course, it's much simpler to make. Canoush buys date syrup either from Iraq or Israel (it can be found in Middle Eastern groceries), and she grinds her walnuts in the food processor, and then stirs the two together.

"Some people add cardamom too, to make it a little more interesting, but my family didn't," said Canoush. "I put a tiny bit of lemon juice to bring out the taste." She adds, "you don't want it too thick, but you don't want the date syrup to run out from the nuts."

While Canoush sometimes makes other versions of charoset as well, she said this one is always the most popular at her table. I suggest adding a bit of flaky sea salt to really bring out the flavors.

Ingredients:

- 2 1/2 cups walnuts
- 1/2 cup date syrup (can be found in Middle Eastern Markets)
- 1 to 2 tbsp lemon juice, to taste

Instructions:

1. Pulse walnuts in a food processor until ground into small pieces.
2. Scrape them into a bowl.
3. Add the date syrup and mix until consistent.
4. Add lemon juice to taste.



⁸⁹ <https://www.kqed.org/bayareabites/94355/bored-of-apples-and-walnuts-try-adding-date-charoset-to-your-passover-table-this-year>

Kehillot haOlam: Passover

Lesson 5: Yemenite Passover

Goals

- To provide a broader understanding of Passover traditions in Yemenite culture.

Essential Questions

- How do Yemenite Jews celebrate Passover?
- How do Yemenite Jews weave their unique story into their Passover practices?

Objectives (*Students will be able to...*)

- Compare and contrast the ways in which they celebrate Passover with that of the Yemenite Jewish community.
- Debate whether soft, Yemenite-inspired, matzo is considered kosher or unkosher for Passover.

Supplies:

- Yemenite Matzo Supplies
 - 3 ½ cups of flour
 - Approx. 1 cup water, chilled or cool
 - 1 tbsp kosher salt
 - Unglazed tiles or pizza stones

Other things to prepare:

- Copies of *Appendix A: Yemenite Seder Night*, 1 per student
- Copies of *Appendix B: Yemenite Matzo*, 1 per student
- Copies of “*The Halachic Acceptability of Soft Matzah by Rabbi Dr. Ari Z Zivotofsky & Dr. Ari Greenspan*,” 1 per student
 - <http://halachicadventures.com/wp-content/uploads/2009/09/Journal-of-contemporary-society-and-halacha-soft-matzah.pdf>

Kehillot haOlam: Passover

Lesson 5: Yemenite Passover

Set Induction:

(10 minutes)

Begin by reviewing the 4 Questions recited during the Passover Seder. Remind the students that they are not actually 4 questions but rather 1 question with 4 answers. See if the students can recall each of them (in Hebrew and English):

<i>Mah nishtanah halailah hazeh mikol haleilot</i> ⁹⁰	How is this night different from all other nights?
<i>Sheb'chol haleilot anu ochlin chametz umatzah, halailah hazeh, kuloh matzah.</i>	On all other nights, we eat <i>chametz</i> (leavened foods) and matzah. Why on this night, only matzah?
<i>Sheb'chol haleilot anu ochlin sh'ar y'rakot, halailah hazeh, maror.</i>	On all other nights, we eat all vegetables. Why, on this night, <i>maror</i> (bitter herbs)?
<i>Sheb'chol haleilot ein anu matbilin afilu pa'am echad; halailah hazeh, sh'tei famim.</i>	On all other nights, we don't dip even once. Why on this night do we dip twice?
<i>Sheb'chol haleilot anu ochlin bein yoshvin uvein m'subin; halailah hazeh, kulanu m'subin.</i>	On all other nights, we eat either sitting upright or reclining. Why on this night do we all recline?

Activity 1: Yemenite Passover Seder

(20 minutes)

- ☞ Try to take yourself back to when you were younger. How did it feel to recite the 4 questions at your Seder? Is it something you would want to do again? If you never did, how do you think you would feel?
- Nerve-wrecking, a lot of pressure, etc.

In the Yemenite Jewish community children play a heavy role in the Seder. Not only do they recite the four questions, but they are also responsible for the *Ma Cha Bar* - a lengthy monologue in Arabic that summarizes in a very humorous and easy to understand way the Exodus from Egypt. We often think of this as the “Maggid,” the retelling of the exodus story. The child holds an egg while saying this, and everyone at the table corrects the Arabic pronunciation in good spirit. The original reason for this was so that the women and children, who did not speak Hebrew in Yemen, would understand the story of the Exodus. ⁹¹

Pass out copies of *Appendix A: Yemenite Seder Night* to each student. Have the students read it with a *hevruta* partner and have them answer the discussion questions below.

⁹⁰ <https://reformjudaism.org/jewish-holidays/passover/four-questions>

⁹¹ <https://www.jpost.com/diaspora/yemenite-seder-night-486563>

Kehillot haOlam: Passover

Lesson 5: Yemenite Passover

After the *hevrutot* have had some time to discuss the questions, bring the group back together. Ask them the following questions:

❓ What is something interesting that came up in your discussion?

Activity 2: Yemenite Matzo

(30 minutes)

As mentioned in the article, Yemenite Matzo is quite unique. It is softer and has more of pita-like consistency. While it may not look like it, it is still considered Kosher matzo for Passover.

Take some time to make Yemenite Matzo using the directions on *Appendix B: Yemenite Matzo*.

Activity 3: The Soft Matzo Debate

(30 minutes)

Discuss the article “*The Halachic Acceptability of Soft Matzah by Rabbi Dr. Ari Z Zivotofsky & Dr. Ari Greenspan*” using the footnote below.⁹² Focus on pages 115-119 for now. Students can either read this individually, in pairs, groups, or as a class.

Then, break the class into two groups: for & against. Using material from this article, have the students pretend as though they are rabbis debating whether they think Yemenite matzo should or should not be considered Kosher for Passover (because it looks like it rises).

Like a classic debate, give each group time to deliberate about their strategy and which points they want to make.

When the debate is finished, conclude by reading p 119-122.

Closure

(5 minutes)

Conclude the session by asking the students the following question:

❓ Are there any Yemenite customs mentioned today that you’d be interested in trying with your family? Which ones and why?

⁹² <http://halachicadventures.com/wp-content/uploads/2009/09/Journal-of-contemporary-society-and-halacha-soft-matzah.pdf>

Yemenite Seder Night ⁹³
By Lisa Samin



The Jews of Yemen celebrate Passover with their own set of customs.

Growing up in a secular home on Long Island, New York, our Passover Seder was a large family gathering that consisted of good food and sweet Manischewitz wine. There was the Passover silver taken out only for this holiday, the symbolic Seder plate and each person reading a passage at the beginning of the Haggada until everyone got hungry.

As a result, when I became more religious, made aliya and married a Yemenite Israeli, I thought that the Seder we celebrated with my husband's extended family was the norm of a traditional Seder. Only in speaking with our non-Yemenite guests did I realize that a Yemenite Seder had quite a few different customs.

For example, there is no Seder plate, as the entire table is the Seder plate. Green lettuce, scallions, celery and radishes are arranged beautifully on the table itself, in the order of the Seder plate, with small bowls of the meat, eggs and haroset placed between the greens.

The haroset is called "*doukah*," which is ancient and appeared once in the Talmud Yerushalmi (Pessahim 10-c), as is written: "Why is it called *doukah*, because she grinds (*dochah*) it with him."

⁹³ <https://www.jpost.com/diaspora/yemenite-seder-night-486563>

Passover Lesson 5: Yemenite Passover

Appendix A

My in-laws always made the doukah together. They would sit on low stools and grind the ingredients in a gold-colored mortar and pestle that was similar to the one they had in Yemen. This was a ritual that was passed down to the children and grandchildren, including my own children.

Why the grinding? Because the doukah is a rich blend of dates, raisins, almonds, pecans and sweet wine, seasoned with lots of cinnamon, cardamom and cloves. The consistency, as the children were told when they were little, was like the soft cement the Jews used when they were slaves in Egypt. No apples or walnuts were to be found.

In contrast to the custom prevalent among Ashkenazi and Sephardi Jews, who recite a blessing over two and a half matzot, Yemenite Jews recite the blessing over one and a half matzot, on the Seder night and all the other nights of Passover. According to Zemach Keissar from Bar-Ilan University's Department of Hebrew Language, Maimonides (Hilchot Hametz Umatza, 8-6) specifies: "He takes two sheets [of matza], places the halved one within the whole one and recites the blessing "Hamotzi lehem min ha'aretz" (Who brings forth bread from the earth).

The matza has a soft, almost pita-like consistency and is made in an open clay oven called a tabun. In Yemen, the matza was made fresh every day in the tabun. There was no store-bought matza. There is a famous story of an emissary from Israel who visited the Yemenite community in the early 1800s and would not eat the matza because he thought it was too thick. However, the head of the community proved to him that this matza was the actual way that matza should be made. The order of the four questions is also slightly different.

And in addition to the traditional four questions, one of the children recites "*Ma cha bar*," a lengthy monologue in Arabic that summarizes in a very humorous and easy to understand way the Exodus from Egypt. The child holds an egg while saying this, and everyone at the table corrects the Arabic pronunciation in good spirit. The original reason for this was so that the women and children, who did not speak Hebrew in Yemen, would understand the story of the Exodus.

After *Ma cha bar*, the leader of the Seder takes the afikoman, which is wrapped in a tallit, slings it over his shoulder and tells everyone that he is walking to Jerusalem. This is to remind the children of the way the Jews left Egypt. The leader leaves the house for a few minutes, and it is customary for the children to run after the leader and tell him to come back and continue the story of the Seder.

The traditional Seder food is Yemenite soup, made with chicken or meat, potatoes, onions and rice that is meticulously cleaned so there is absolutely no doubt that it is kosher for Pesach. The matza is broken into small pieces, the soup is poured over this, and it is called "*phatoot*."

Passover Lesson 5: Yemenite Passover

Appendix A

The Yemenites eat this as a meal every day of Passover. My children ate this for years; but now that they are older, they have decided to add more variety to the Passover menu.

Although “*Had Gadya*” was not sung in Yemen, many families have added it to their Seder in Israel, although my husband’s family sings it with a Yemenite melody. When the Seder comes to a close, well after midnight, it ends with the singing of The Song of Songs, *Shir Hashirim*.

There is another custom that I remember from my late mother-in-law, although I am not sure it is Yemenite. After the children fell asleep, she would put walnuts under their pillows. When they found them in the morning, she would tell them with a smile, “This is your present from Eliyahu Hanavi.”

Discussion:

- ❓ How are Yemenite Passover customs similar to and different from the Passover customs in your own family?
- ❓ What are some Passover customs that make your family unique?
- ❓ What parts of the Seder do you look forward to each year?
- ❓ What role do you play in your family’s Passover Seder?

Yemenite Matzo ⁹⁴

Ingredients

- 3 ½ cups of flour
- Approx. 1 cup water, chilled or cool
- 1 tbsp kosher salt



Directions

1. Line the lowest rack in your oven with the tiles. Set the oven to its maximum temperature on the grill setting, around 500° F. Wait until the tiles have reached the same temperature, about an hour. You can check this with an infrared thermometer.
2. Fill your bowl or stand mixer with the flour and salt. Starting with ½ cup water, slowly pour as you combine it with the flour. Stop adding water once the ingredients are fully integrated and form one complete ball of dough that is soft but not sticky. If it's too sticky, add a little bit of flour. The final amount of water will vary, depending on many factors, such as flour quality and humidity.
3. Knead the dough for at least 10 minutes.
4. Break off manageable chunks of the dough, between ⅛ and ⅙ of the complete mass, and give to every shaper.
5. Shape the dough into a flat thin circle, either by hand or with a rolling pin.
6. Place the circles onto the hot tiles.
7. Monitor the dough in the oven and bake each side until darkened, about 1–2 minutes per side. Air bubbles are normal.
8. Cool flatbreads inside a folded tea towel.
9. If there is dough left, repeat steps 4–8.

⁹⁴ <https://medium.com/@DavidRegev/bake-soft-matzo-at-home-df3bf586c549>

Kehillot haOlam: Passover

Lesson 6: Authentic Assessment

Goals

- To synthesize the learning from lessons 1-5.
- To create a new Passover practice that feels authentic to them.
- To honor the Passover practices that they have explored throughout this unit.

Essential Questions

- What have I learned from this unit?
- How can I take what I've learned into my life today?
- How can the learning from the unit impact my current Passover practice?

Objectives (*Students will be able to...*)

- Synthesize the learning and articulate their takeaways that occurred between lessons 1-5.
- Summarize how they plan to honor the Passover traditions learned throughout this unit.

Notes to the Educator

This lesson looks the same for every unit. While the content and number of lessons in each unit differ, this final lesson will include an authentic assessment of the student's choosing. This lesson lists multiple options for the students, however there are an endless number of options. As best you can (within reason) encourage students to think creatively regarding how they want to show their learning on this day. For many of these options, it is advised that they choose their authentic assessment assignment *before* the unit begins, as they may need to do things throughout the unit to contribute to this assessment. Instruct them to do a different Authentic Assessment for each unit.

As the educator, you can also decide that every student does the same assignment but adjusts it to appeal to their needs and understanding of the material. If that is the case, it is advised that you choose 1 option per unit so that they do not duplicate assignments between units.

Refer to the Hanukkah Authentic Assessment on p. 199 for script.

Kehillot haOlam: Passover

Lesson 6: Authentic Assessment

Set Induction

(2 minutes)

Explain to the students that they will do what we call an “authentic assessment” of the learning done throughout this unit. An authentic assessment is a way for an educator to gauge what material was learned throughout a given time. Remind students that unlike in school when they are given tests, and papers, this authentic assessment, allows them to create something meaningful to them.

Let the students know that you will provide a list of authentic assessment ideas that they could do for this Passover. They will see this same list for each unit; however they must do different assessments for each one. If none of these ideas speak to the students, encourage them to bring in other ideas. There are only 2 criteria: it must show what you have learned in some way and it should be something that you are excited to create.

Activity 1

(10-15 minutes)

Begin by reviewing what they have learned during this Passover unit. Encourage students to list as many things as they can remember first, then you can jump in to remind them of details.

Activity 2

(10 minutes)

Now it is their turn to create something meaningful. List the variety of options for them to choose from.

Cook Passover Food

- Research Passover food from around the world.

Explore Other Traditions

- There is more to explore!?

Vision Board

- Using magazines, paper, scissors and glue, create a collage board that includes ideas learned throughout this lesson. This should somehow illustrate how you plan to bring these global Jewish practices to life.

Blog Post

- Write a blog post that illustrates your three main takeaways from this unit. What did you learn and how has it impacted your Jewish identity? What questions do you still have? What are you most looking forward to exploring further?

Kehillot haOlam: Passover

Lesson 6: Authentic Assessment

Vlog

- Similar to the blog, record yourself discussing your three main takeaways from this unit. You could even bring in video clippings from previous lessons to better illustrate your learning.

Instagram Story

- Using your Instagram or a new Instagram account, document the variety of activities that we did throughout this unit. This can be done as the lessons are taught and/or something larger at the end to summarize.

Song Playlist

- Create a playlist of Passover music from around the world. Publish the playlist somewhere (perhaps the synagogues website and/or social media page) so that others can enjoy these songs.

Organize a Service

- Shed light on the unknown details of Passover practices around the world by creating a Shabbat service for the synagogue. This could include brief histories and anecdotes or music from various places.

Cooking

- Cook a dish involving foods that are in season during Passover. Creatively explain each food's origin and share some of the community's history in which it derives.

Interview

- Find someone who is of a different Jewish origin than you. Interview them about their family's history and any unique customs, traditions or rituals associated with Passover within their family.

Kehillot haOlam: Conclusion

Multi-Cultural Guide

Goals

- To synthesize the learning from units 1-6.
- To create a Multi-Cultural guide for the synagogue to use the following year.
- To honor the Jewish practices that they have explored throughout this curriculum.

Essential Questions

- What have we learned from this curriculum?
- How can we teach the rest of the synagogue about the myriad of ways that Judaism is practiced around the world?
- How can we share our unique Jewish practices that have created throughout this year?

Objectives (*Students will be able to...*)

- Synthesize the learning and articulate their takeaways that occurred between units 1-6.
- Create a Multi-Cultural guide for the synagogue.

Supplies

- Computers or iPads with internet access, 1 for every 2-3 students
- Highlighters
- 6 Index Cards
- 6 Pens

Other Things to Prepare

- 1 full copy of this curriculum, printed and divided by unit.

Notes to the Educator

This lesson should be split between two different class periods: 1 where they do most of the research, and the second where they are creating their Multi-Cultural Guide or finishing up final pieces.

Before you or the teens order any supplies, speak with your administrative team to get a budget for this project.

Kehillot haOlam: Conclusion

Multi-Cultural Guide

Set Induction

(10 minutes)

Begin by asking the students to share their answers to the following question. Write responses on the board as they share.

- ⌚ What has been the most meaningful lesson that we have explored this year?
- ⌚ What was meaningful about it? (encourage them to be as specific as possible.)

Activity 1: Review

(20 minutes)

Explain that the final project of the year will be to create Multi-Cultural Guide for the synagogue to use for years to come. This should be viewed as a unique opportunity to make a lasting impact on the synagogue as a whole. It can be in whatever form makes sense for the synagogue, as long as it is something very user friendly and easy to implement.

Break the class into 6 groups. Assign each group one of the holidays / units we explored this year: Background, Rosh Hashanah, Sukkot / Simchat Torah, Hannukah, Purim, and Passover. They can choose or you can assign them.

Give each group the printed copy of their unit. You can choose to include or not include the lessons that you did not cover. Have them spend time reading through the material to remind them of the learning activities they participated in throughout the year. As they do, encourage them to highlight activities that were especially meaningful for them and/or aspects that could be a part of their Multi-Cultural Guide in some way.

Activity 2: Brainstorm

(30 minutes)

Spend some time brainstorming either as a class, or in their small groups, what their Multi-Cultural Guide could look like. Encourage them to think as creatively as possible – no idea is out of the question for this part of the process. You, or a member of your clergy team, may need to help guide them in thinking of a guide that would be in line with the vision of the synagogue. This could be by simply pulling the vision and mission statement off the synagogue website or bringing in a Rabbi, Cantor or Education Director to speak to the students. Again, this person can circle amongst the groups or speak to the entire class.

As they come up with ideas, have them recorded on a shared document that you and the rest of their small group has access to (i.e. Google doc.)

Kehillot haOlam: Conclusion

Multi-Cultural Guide

Activity 3: Narrowing it Down

(10 minutes)

Once the students have done a significant amount of brainstorming, have each group vote on what ideas they want to move forward with. Each group should have a max of 3 ideas that they would like to explore further.

Have them write their ideas down on an index card. Make sure the index card includes the holiday they are focusing on and the names of the students in the group.

Once you have received each group's index card, take a moment to review it and circle which idea you would like them to explore.

Activity 4: Supply Lists

(5-15 minutes)

This is when the students will begin to dive in and create their Multi-Cultural Guides within their groups.

Instruct them to begin thinking about the supplies they will need to complete their guide. Some groups may not need any supplies. For the groups that are requiring supplies, have them research where they will get the supplies and for the cheapest amount possible. Some supplies could be easy to get at the synagogue already (i.e. art supplies) while other supplies may need to be ordered. If they need supplies from Amazon, they should share the supply list (with links and quantities) on the shared document from Activity 2. Be mindful of shipping as they should have their supplies by the following class.

If you are breaking this session into two, this is where Part I should stop. The index card review should be completed before the students meet again so they can jump right into their project the next time you meet.

Activity 5: Multi-Cultural Guide Creation

(1 hour)

Give students about an hour to create their Multi-Cultural Guide for the synagogue. Make sure to spend an even amount of time supporting each group. Again, this may be something you want to ask a Rabbi, Cantor or Education Director to be present for.

Depending on what you and your students decide, this may need a third week and/or outside class time to complete.

Kehillot haOlam: Conclusion

Multi-Cultural Guide

Closure

Use this as an opportunity to present their work. This can take place as a stand-alone event, throughout a shabbat experience or any other way that is meaningful to the students. As best you can, encourage the students to drive this as well. The more say they have in this process, the more they will be bought into it as a whole.

EXTRA EXPLORATION

Kehillot haOlam: Extra Exploration

Shabbat and Havdallah

Below is a list of Jewish practices around Shabbat and Havdallah that did not fit into a unit. Feel free to explore these as a class in whatever way feels meaningful for your students.

Ethiopian Buna

- Buna is the traditional Ethiopian coffee ceremony often performed during Havdallah.

India Shabbat Greeting and Prayers

- Indian Jews have a unique shabbat greeting: you place your hands over someone else's, look the other person in the eyes, wish them a shabbat shalom, and then bring your hands to your lips to kiss them, all while maintaining eye contact with the person before you.
- In addition to the prayers over candles, wine, and challah on Shabbat, Indian Jews also say a prayer over bananas (*borei pri haetz*) and dates (*borei pri haadamah*).

Yemenite Foods

- On Shabbat, Yemenite Jews cook a dish called Dafna, which is often referred to as Mizrahi cholent.
- In addition to challah, Yemenite Jews cool Kubaneh, a salty, buttery croissant served with eggs, grated tomatoes, and spicy sauces. ⁹⁵

Mexican Pinch of Dough ⁹⁶

- Before Shabbat, Mexican Jews remove a pinch from a batch of dough and throwing it into the fire.

Israeli Shabbat Customs

- In Israel, Shabbat is a time when many streets are empty, buses don't run, and shops are closed
- A Shabbat meal in Israel often involved a variety of salatim, or small salads, which are served as side dishes to the main meal.

⁹⁵ <https://www.labna.it/en/kubaneh-yemeni-buttery-bread-rolls.html>

⁹⁶ <https://www.cs.tau.ac.il/~nachum/sch/AnusimMexico.pdf>

Kehillot haOlam: Extra Exploration

Unique Customs

Below is a list of Jewish practices that did not fit into a unit. Feel free to explore these as a class in whatever way feels meaningful for your students.

Indian Malida Ceremony

- At the core of the Bnai Israel Jewish Indian community is the Malida.
- Both a dish and a ceremony surrounding the food, that are essential to the group of nearly 60,000 in Israel and a few thousand living in India. The dish of sweetened, moistened, parched (dried) and flattened rice is prayed over, and like offering at the temple mount and traditions of Hindus offering food at local Indian temples, is offered to God. The dish is served and celebrated during many happy occasions such as wedding henna ceremonies, engagement parties, housewarming parties and when blessings for bon voyage, safety or good health are wished upon. ⁹⁷

Mexico ⁹⁸

- Burning nail clippings - The Talmud states that the “one who buries his nail trimming is righteous’ one who burns them is saintly; while one who throws them out is wicked.
- The table is regarded as a holy place - Talmudic Dictum: 323 “in the time of the temple, the altar atoned for a person; now that there is no temple a person’s table atones for him.”
- Anusim avoid pointing to the stars, since the Inquisition was on the lookout for crypto-Jews waiting for start to appear, indicating the end of Sabbath, holiday and fast days.

Israel

- Israel celebrates two National Holidays: Yom Hazikaron (Day of Remembrance) and Yom Ha’atzmaut (Israel’s Independence Day)

Cuba

- Cuban Jews eat 12 grapes at midnight before Rosh Hashanah and the secular New Year
- In the Cuban Jewish community, women have Mah Jongg groups at the same time that men play dominos

⁹⁷ <https://forward.com/food/141171/ancient-rice-offering-is-the-heart-of-indias-jewis/>

⁹⁸ <http://www.cs.tau.ac.il/~nachum/sch/sch/PAPERS/Obscure.txt>