

JEWISH VALUES: Kindergarten to Grade 3

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2005

Alexander, Sue. *Behold the Trees*. New York: Scholastic Press, 2001. ISBN 0590762117.

A land once protected by all sorts of wonderful trees is reduced over time by war and environmental neglect to desert, until new settlers plant trees and slowly make Israel bloom again.

Biers-Ariel, Matt. *Solomon and the Trees*. New York: UAHC Press, 2001. ISBN 0807407496.

Drawing on legends about King Solomon and Jewish teachings about humankind's responsibility to care for nature, this serious, dramatically illustrated story stresses personal responsibility.

Bogot, Howard and Mary K. Bogot. *Seven Animal Stories for Children*. New York: Pitspopany Press, 1997. ISBN 0943706408.

---. *Seven Animals Wag Their Tales*. New York: Pitspopany Press, 2000. ISBN 1930143001.

Bunting, Eve. *Terrible Things: An Allegory of the Holocaust*. Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 1989. ISBN 0827603258

Animals of the forest are carried away by the Terrible Things, not realizing that if they stick together and do not look the other way, such terrible things might not happen.

---. *The Wednesday Surprise*. New York: Clarion, 1989. ISBN 0899197213.

A loving story about a proud granddaughter and her successful efforts to teach her grandmother to read. A plug for literacy is just the bonus; the real focus is on the lessons old and young share when they learn to read each other's hearts.

Cohn, Janice. *The Christmas Menorahs: How a Town Fought Hate*. Morton Grove, Illinois: Albert Whitman & Company, 1995. ISBN 0807511528

Cone, Molly. *Who Knows Ten? : Children's Tales of the Ten Commandments*. New York: UAHC Press, 1998 (rev. ed.). ISBN 080400807.

Davis, Aubrey. *Bone Button Borscht*. Toronto: Kids Can Press, 1995. ISBN 1550743260.

This is a retelling of “Stone Soup” set against the background of a Jewish *shtetl*. The mean and stingy townspeople learn the valuable lesson of sharing from the poor beggar who comes into their town.

--- . *Bagels from Benny*. Toronto: Kids Can Press, 2003. ISBN 1553374177.

Bagels from Benny explores the values of caring and sharing, building a strong sense of community and finding joy in giving thanks.

de Paola, Tomie. *Now One Foot, Now the Other*. New York G.P. Putnam, 1981. ISBN 0399207740.

Elkins, Dov Peretz. *Seven Delightful Stories For Every Day*. New York: Pitspopany Press, 2000. ISBN 1930143036.

Fenton, Anne Lobock. *Tikun Olam: Fixing the World*. Cambridge, Mass: Brookline Books, 1997. ISBN 1571290494.

Mr. Mitzvoh, a good-natured handyman, tries to fix his dying friend, Dr. Mender. Discusses the Jewish tradition of doing *mitzvot*, or good deeds.

Fisher, Adam. *God’s Garden: A Bible Companion of Children’s Stories*. Behrman House, 1999. ISBN 0874416965

Ganz, Yaffa. *Shuki’s Upside Down Dream*. New York: Feldheim, 1986. ISBN 0873063848.

When Shuki's aged aunt visits, he dreams about what it is like to be old, and learns something in the process about the *mitzvah* of honouring the elderly.

Gershator, Phillis. *Honi’s Circle of Trees*. Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 1994. ISBN 0827605710.

Retells the wondrous deeds of Honi the Circle Maker who wandered over the land of ancient Israel planting carob seeds.

Glaser, Linda. *The Borrowed Hanukkah Latkes*. Morton Grove, Illinois: Albert Whitman & Company, 1997. ISBN 0807508411.

Gradually, Rachel persuades the family's neighbor Mrs. Greenberg to join them for Hanukkah.

Golding, Goldie. *Dovy and the Surprise Guests*. New York: Mesorah Publications, Ltd., 1993. ISBN 0899065120.

Goodman, David R. *The Mitzvah Mouse*. Jerusalem: Gefen Publishing House, 1992. ISBN 9652290696.

Greenfield, Eloise. *Grandmama's Joy*. New York: Collins, 1980. ISBN 0399210044.

Harber, Frances. *The Brothers' Promise*. Morton Grove, Illinois: Albert Whitman & Company, 1998. ISBN 0807509000.

When the brothers Yankel and Josef keep their promise to their dying father by sharing with one another, they cause the angels in heaven to weep with joy.

Hershenhorn, Esther. *Chicken Soup By Heart*. New York: Simon and Schuster Books for Young Readers, 2002. ISBN 0689826656.

A charming picture book that demonstrates the *mitzvot* of caring for the sick and respecting one's elders.

Jaffe, Nina. *The Uninvited Guest and Other Jewish Holiday Tales*. New York: Scholastic, 1993. ISBN 0590446533.

Kimmelman, Leslie. *Sound the Shofar*. New York: HarperCollins, 1998. ISBN 0060275014.

This informative and easy-going story, which follows a family's observance of the Days of Awe, is set in a Jewish community served by a modest synagogue with mixed seating and a female cantor. Nice touches are the pre-Yom Kippur food drive for the needy, discussion of fasting by children and family pets, and explanation of the attitude of reflection at a level which primary age children can understand.

Korinchak, Sandra (ed.) *The 11th Commandment: Wisdom from Our Children*. Woodstock, Vermont: Jewish Lights Publishing, 1996. ISBN 187904546X.

American children's suggestions for an eleventh commandment, illustrated with their drawings.

Lachner, Dorothea. *Andrew's Angry Words*. New York: North-South Books, 1997. ISBN 1558587691.

When his sister trips and sends all his toys flying, Andrew lets loose a lot of nasty angry words that start to spread from person to person creating trouble wherever they go.

Lieberman, Syd. *The Wise Shoemaker of Studena*. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1994. ISBN 0827605099.

Melmed, Laura Kraus. *Moishe's Miracle*. New York: Harper Collins, 2000. ISBN 0688146821.

On the eve of Hanukkah, a kind, poor man receives a magic frying pan that produces endless latkes. Moishe wants to feed the whole village but his wife, Baila, has other ideas. When they backfire, she learns a lesson. The deep, dusky illustrations glow with magic.

Mochizuki, Ken. *Passage to Freedom: The Sugihara Story*. New York: Lee & Low Books, Inc., 1997. ISBN 1880000490.

Here is the authorized true story of Chiune Sugihara, the "Japanese Schindler", who saved thousands of Jews during World War II. "Passage to Freedom" tells Sugihara's heroic story, highlighting his courageous humanity and the importance of a child's opinion in his father's decision.

Muchnik, Michael. *Tuvia's Train That Had No End*. Brooklyn, NY: Merkos L'inyonei Chinuch, Inc., 1978. ISBN 082660353X.

Newman, Leslea. *Matzo Ball Moon*. Boston, Mass: Houghton Mifflin, 1998. ISBN 039571530X.

Bubbe arrives to make her special chicken soup and matzo balls for the family Seder. Eleanor is her assistant and trainee. This appealing Passover story embodies the loving bond between generations and the continuity of Jewish traditions. Soft illustrations maintain the tone of the text.

Oberman, Sheldon. *The Wisdom Bird: A Tale of Solomon and Sheba*. Honesdale, Pennsylvania: Boyds Mill Press, 2000. ISBN 1563978164.

In this elegantly illustrated folktale blending Jewish and African traditions, King Solomon is challenged by the visiting Queen of Sheba to build a palace of bird beaks. The little hoopoe bird humbly shows them what a cruel folly this would be.

Polacco, Patricia. *Babushka Baba Yaga*. Philomel Books, 1993. ISBN 0399225315.

Polacco's version of this Russian folk tale can be an excellent tool for learning to love each other. As the villagers learned to appreciate Baba Yaga for the wonderful creature she was and not the fearsome one they had heard about, we learn not to judge people on external qualities or supposed characteristics.

----. *Chicken Sunday*. New York: Charles Scribners' Sons, 1986. ISBN 0399221336.

With the rich folk-art style and lively text for which she has become well-known, Patricia Polacco has created an outstanding family story of trust, love, and acceptance. After her own grandmother dies, a young Russian-American girl is initiated into her neighbor's family.

----. *My Rotten Redheaded Older Brother*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1998. ISBN 0689820364.

After losing running, climbing, throwing, and burping competitions to her obnoxious older brother, a young girl makes a wish on a falling star.

----. *The Trees of the Dancing Goats*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996. ISBN 0689808623.

During a scarlet-fever epidemic one winter in Michigan, a Jewish family helps make Christmas special for the sick neighbors by making their own Hanukkah miracle.

Prose, Francine. *You Never Know: A Legend of the Lamed-vavniks*. New York: Greenwillow Books, 1998. ISBN 0-688-15806-4 (trade).

Though mocked by the rest of the villagers, poor Schmuel the shoemaker turns out to be a very special person.

Reisman, Ofra. *If Not Higher: Where did the Rabbi Disappear To*. The World Zionist Organization, Based on a story by Y.L. Peretz.

---. *Shimon's Field and the Public Road*. Jerusalem: WZO-JAFI Joint Authority for Zionist Jewish Education, 1992. Based on Baba Kama 50.

Rosenfeld, Dina Herman. *A Tree Full of Mitzvos*. Brooklyn, NY: Merkos L'inyonei Chinuch, Inc., 1985.

---. *The Very Best Place for a Penny*. New York: Kehot Publications, 1989. ISBN 0826603629.

Emphasizes the *mitzvah* of giving charity, through the tale of penny in a drawer contemplating the very best place for himself.

----. *Yossi and Laibel On the Ball*. New York: Hachai, 1998. ISBN 0922613834.

A new boy moves into Yossi and Laibel's neighborhood, showing the brothers that even though he uses a wheelchair, he's a great baseball pitcher. One of several books about Yossi and Laibel, this imparts a wholesome message in a child-centered manner. The rhyming narrative and realistic illustrations lend themselves to reading aloud.

Rosenthal, Yaffa. *Mitzvos We Can Do*. Brooklyn, NY: Mesorah Pub. Ltd., 1982. ISBN 0899067751.

Rossel, Seymour. *Sefer Ha-Aggadah: The Book of Legends for Young People*. Vol. 1. New York: UAHC Press, 1996. ISBN 0807406031.

---. *Sefer Ha-Aggadah: The Book of Legends for Young People*. Vol. 2. New York: UAHC Press, 1998. ISBN 0807406031.

Sasso, Sandy Eisenberg. *God Said Amen*. Woodstock, NY: Jewish Lights Publishing, 2000. ISBN 1580230806.

Although each has what the other needs, the rulers of the Kingdom of Midnight and the Kingdom of the Desert are too proud to ask for what they want.

Siegel, Danny. *The Humongous Pushka in the Sky*. Pittsboro, NC: The Town House Press, 1993. ISBN 0940653362.

Swartz, Nancy Sohn. *In Our Image: God's First Creatures*. Woodstock, VT: Jewish Lights, 1998. ISBN 1879045990.

All of G-d's creation gather to witness the creation of man and woman and each gives the new humans a gift based on its own nature: laziness from the lizard, curiosity from the chimpanzee, warmth from the sun, etc. G-d adds to those gifts goodness, love, and kindness so that humanity will live in harmony with nature. Deeply colored illustrations have fluid, sweeping lines.

Syme, Deborah Shayne. *Partners*. New York: UAHC Press, 1990. ISBN 0807404357.
Josh and Jacob learn that every Jew can be God's partner in healing the world.

Waldman, Neil. *The Never-Ending Greenness*. New York: Morrow Junior Books, 1997. ISBN 0688144799 (trade)

When his family comes to live in Israel after the end of World War II, a young boy begins planting and caring for trees, a practice that spreads across the whole country.

Weilerstein, Sadie Rose. *The Best of K'Tonton*. Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 1980. ISBN 0827601840.

K'tonton was created in 1930, and this Jewish “Tom Thumb” character has been in our lives ever since. Nearly all the 16 stories have ethical lessons to teach.

Weinstock, Malky. *There's Room in My House*. Jerusalem/Nanuet, NY: Ohr-LightPress/Feldheim, 2002. ISBN 097160990X.

An unexpected visitor convinces Sarah that sharing Shabbat enriches its meaning.

Zalben, Jane Breskin. *Let There Be Light: Poems and Prayers for Repairing the World*. New York: Penguin Putnam Books for Young Readers, 2002. ISBN 0525469958

Zelcer, Draizy. *Once Upon a Time*. New York: Hachai, 2001. ISBN 1929628005.

A charming rhymed story that teaches about time by showing analog clock faces at different times of the day and by telling a story of an observant town where every moment of the day is used to perform *mitzvot*. Oversized, bright illustrations complement the story and the concept.