

Theme: Hanukkah

Week: 8

Learning Outcomes

Students Will:

- Know the story of Hanukkah
- Understand why Hanukkah is important
- Learn what *Nes Gadol Haya Sham* means

Materials & Resources

- Dreidels
- Paint, paper, paper plates
- Sensory filler items
 - cotton balls
 - white pom poms
 - packing peanuts
 - fake snow

Arrival/Warm Up (15 min)

Put a variety of different dreidels out on the table for students to take turns with. Have them explore them, try spinning them, and discuss what they know and what they wonder about the dreidels. They can discuss amongst themselves or with you as you circulate the room.

Specific Accommodations

- If possible, put student picture next to their name at the table so they know where to sit even if they cannot recognize their names in print.
- Pre-assign dreidels to specific students if you think they will have a hard time sharing

Tefilah Time (15 min)

This week, before *tefilot* starts, remind students of some of the things they were grateful for last week. Ask them if they are still grateful for this and if there is something else they would add. Before the *Amidah*, ask students if there is something they want to ask God for. Give examples like asking God to heal someone who is sick or to help someone in need.

Specific Accommodations

- Use cube chairs, cushions, carpet dots, or hula hoops for students who need support sitting on the floor or for students who need help understanding how to stay in their spot
- Allow students to point to something they are thankful for if they do not want to say it out loud

Centers (45 min. 15 each)



Center Theme: Hebrew Letters

Center Activity: Hebrew Letters of the Dreidel

Provide a number of different dreidels for students to explore. Have the phrase “*Nes Gadol Haya Sham*” in large letters on a white board or printed on a piece of paper. Highlight, bold, or underline the first letter of each of the words and have students practice tracing them, saying their sounds, writing them on white boards or with their fingers. Have them “stretch” the letters and words so that they are taking the time to fully feel and hear the sounds of each of the letters (ex. “shhhhhhhhhhhh aaaaaa mmmmmmm”).

Specific Accommodations:

- Provide only the first letters of the phrase if the whole thing is overwhelming
- Provide models of different ways students can create these letters

Center Theme: Art

Center Activity: Dreidel Art

Have students paint with dreidels. Put out paper plates and small amounts of paint on the plates as well as plastic dreidels. Have students dip the dreidel in the paint, then spin it on a piece of paper and see what designs it makes. Students can also dip the sides of their dreidels into the paint and use them as stamps to stamp on the letters onto their papers.

Specific Accommodations:

- Provide different types of dreidels so that there is one that everyone can use (bigger ones for those with fine motor difficulties)
- Lay down plastic tablecloths or newspaper so that students can access the activity without being concerned about the mess

Center Theme: Sensory Exploration

Center Activity: Hanukkah Sensory Box

Create a scavenger hunt in a sensory box. Because Hanukkah typically falls in the winter, fill a box or sensory table with white pom poms, cotton balls, packing peanuts, or fake snow (if you have it) and then hide different Hanukkah items in the box. Have students collect them and try to identify them.

Specific Accommodations:

- Provide a list of pictures of the items hidden
- Allow students to use tweezers or spoons to pull items out if they do not want to touch the material in the box

Bracha Spotlight (and snack time, 20 min):

This week serve potato chips for snack because they are made with oil! On *Hanukkah* we eat foods made with oil. Say the *shehakol bracha*.

Whole Group Activity (30 min):

Tell the story of Hanukkah. At the end, explain that because of the miracles of Hanukkah, each dreidel has the letters *Nun, Gimmel, Hey, Shin* on them to stand for *Nes Gadol Haya Sham*. This means a great miracle happened there.

Play the *Nes Gadol Haya Sham* Game!

Sit in a circle and teach hand motions to go along with each word.

- *Nes*- Wave your fingers like a magic wand
- *Gadol*- reach your arms out wide like you are holding something big
- *Haya*- point to your wrist like you are checking a clock
- *Sham*- point to a far away spot

Practice saying these words and doing the hand motions over and over- doing them in different orders and different ways every time. Ex. say them fast, say them in a robot voice, do the actions like they are in slow motion, say them in silly voices, etc.

Finally, hide pictures around the room that represent these 4 words. Have students search for them. When they find one, have them yell out the word they think it corresponds with and have all the students respond by doing the hand motion.

Specific Accommodations:

- Repeat hand motions and words slowly and frequently so all students have a chance to learn them
- Allow some students to only do the hand motion if the word is hard for them to remember or only say the word if they do not remember the hand motion
- Allow students to work in pairs or groups when searching for the pictures around the room

Closing/*Lehitraot* (10 min):

- Have students share with the group or individually what their favorite part of the Hanukkah story is.
- Finally, sing *Shalom Chaverim* together

The Story of Hanukkah

A long time ago in Israel, there was a beautiful Temple where Jewish people went to pray.



One day, a mean king took over and told the Jews they were not allowed to pray to their own God or follow their Jewish traditions. He started a war (like a really big fight) to try to destroy the Jewish Temple and force Jews to pray differently.



One brave and small Jewish army called the Macabees decided to stand up and fight back. Even though they were smaller, they still won!



After the war, when they went to check on the Menorah (the special lamp they used to light), they realized there was only enough oil to last one day. But something amazing happened! The oil lasted 8 whole nights and the lights from the Menorah shined brightly!



Now, every year, we celebrate Hanukkah for eight nights to celebrate the miracles that happened long ago. We eat oily foods like latkes and *sufganiyot*, light *Chanukiot* and play dreidel.



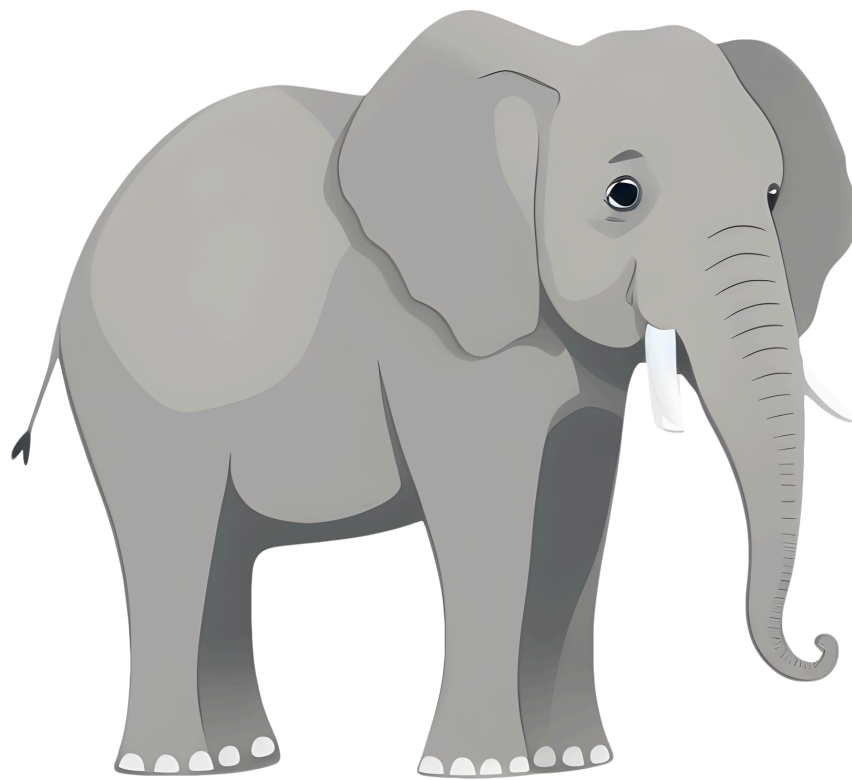
Images for Nes Gadol Haya Sham Game

(2 per word, cut out each image)



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