

Teaching Guide to:



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Introduction

The *Look at Me* preschool booklets introduce basic Jewish concepts and values while teaching learning readiness skills. This teaching guide identifies the three layers of lessons—Jewish, general, and developmental—of the *Look at Me* series. It outlines specific ways to bring these lessons into the classroom, as well as ways parents can reinforce these lessons at home. This guide also provides developmentally appropriate learning activities to complement the *Look at Me* texts, maximize the classroom experience, and engage students across a broad spectrum of learning styles.

This guide is divided into six sections:

1. Lesson Planning
2. Skill-based Activities
3. General Activities
4. Activities for *Look at Me: I Can Do a Mitzvah*
5. Activities for *Look at Me: I Can Learn and Do in the Synagogue*
6. Activities for *Look at Me: I Can Celebrate Shabbat*
7. Activities for *Look at Me: I Can Celebrate Hanukkah*
8. Activities for the Home

1. Lesson Planning

Even at the early childhood level, the lesson plan is the centerpiece of classroom preparation. When drafting a *Look at Me* lesson plan, keep in mind these four ways to maximize its effectiveness:

- A. Adjust Instruction to Match Skill Level.** Several exercises in the *Look at Me* booklets ask children to circle or underline pictures, or to write numbers. If they do not yet possess fine motor or writing skills, modify the exercises. Instead of having them write the number “3,” for example, encourage them to count to three out loud. Instead of underlining an object, let the children point to it.
- B. Mix and Match Activities.** This guide outlines physical activities and verbal exercises to supplement the pencil-to-paper activities in the booklets themselves. Be sure to involve the whole child—mind and body—in the learning experience.
- C. Pace Activities.** Pace classroom activities to accommodate children’s attention spans and interests. Plan a series of short activities interspersed with longer ones. This keeps the children engaged, and also allows for varying periods of lower and higher energy teaching.
- D. Revisit Previous Lessons.** The lessons contained in each booklet speak to a common educational theme and reinforce each other. Consider the whole booklet when developing an individual lesson plan; this will help you envision how to revisit a lesson in future classes.

2. Skill-Based Activities

Lesson plans are particularly helpful with the *Look at Me* series as each booklet introduces children to Jewish concepts and terms while strengthening general learning readiness skills. The chart below identifies developmental skills that can be incorporated into *Look at Me* activities, in conjunction with or independent of Jewish identity formation.

Learning Readiness Skill	Make It Jewish	Keep It Skill Based
Counting	Count Jewish items, such as Israeli coins, dreidels, or Hebrew blocks.	Separate children into groups and instruct them to count off. Consider naming groups after favorite ice cream flavors or colors.
Shape Recognition	Display shapes using a rectangular siddur or a circular kippah. Complement the exercise with hamantashen—triangular Purim cookies.	Play “Shapes in Motion.” Encourage children to run around. When you hold up a circle, the children should stop. When you hold up a triangle, the children should jump up and down. Feel free to use a variety of shapes and motions.
Color Recognition	Practice colors by waving an Israeli flag (blue and white) or shaking a lulav and etrog (green and yellow).	Play “Class Closet.” Have the class stand in a circle. Stand in the middle and announce that you are in the “Class Closet” and are looking for something red. Any child wearing something red should run to you. Make sure that every child is called. Add in funny requests, such as “a blue fur coat.”
Exercising Fine Motor Skills	Form the letters of the <i>Sh'ma</i> out of clay or decorate an outlined Star of David.	Play “Classroom Bakery.” Have the children form “cookies” using colorful clay. Take the “cookies” out of the classroom to “bake.” At the end of the day, surprise students with real cookies for a sweet, snack-time treat.
Size Comparisons	Display differently sized Jewish objects, such as a long and short shofar or a big and small latke.	Have the children line up in height order. See which child can reach the highest point in the classroom. Or, have children compare the size of their hands.

3. General Activities

The *Look at Me* lessons introduce children to Jewish values, Jewish ritual objects, and Hebrew words or phrases. Described below are eight general activities that will help you explain a Jewish value, display a ritual object, or teach a Hebrew word or phrase. These general activity ideas provide visual, auditory, tactile, and kinesthetic reinforcement to *Look at Me*'s pencil-to-paper exercises.

- A. **Take a Trip** (*Jewish ritual object*). Take a class trip to discover the items and places outlined in the booklets. For example, plan a class trip to the synagogue sanctuary to complement exercises about the sanctuary (*Look at Me: I Can Learn and Do in the Synagogue*, p. 3).
- B. **Shout It Out Loud** (*Hebrew words and phrases*). Practice saying difficult words out loud and define them clearly. For example, when introducing the mitzvah "honor your parents," pronounce the word "mitzvah," then define "honor" (*Look at Me: I Can Do a Mitzvah*, p. 6).
- C. **Room for Dessert** (*Jewish value*). Use food to create a memorable connection to a Jewish holiday. Explain to the children that one way we celebrate holidays is by eating particular foods. Accompany lessons about the Jewish holidays with holiday snacks. Follow a lesson about latkes and sufganiyot with a Hanukkah food festival. (*Look at Me: I Can Celebrate Hanukkah*, p. 8)
- D. **Sing a Song** (*Hebrew words and phrases*). Enrich lessons by teaching children relevant songs. For example, teach children Shabbat melodies after you introduce the connection between Jewish holidays and singing (*Look at Me: I Can Celebrate Shabbat*, p. 13).
- E. **Invite a Guest** (*Hebrew words and phrases*). Enliven class by inviting a guest. For example, consider inviting your congregation's rabbi to visit the class after the children learn the title "Rabbi." Encourage the rabbi to explain his or her role in the synagogue (*Look at Me: I Can Learn and Do in the Synagogue*, p. 8).
- F. **Incorporate a Holiday** (*Jewish ritual object, Jewish value*). Link classroom lessons to the Jewish calendar. For example, review the mitzvah of "Taking Care of God's World" around Tu B'Shevat (*Look at Me: I Can Do a Mitzvah*, p. 12).
- G. **Jewish Show and Tell** (*Jewish ritual object*). Introduce the children to Jewish ritual objects by bringing the objects into the classroom for children to see and touch. For example, bring a menorah to class when introducing the Hanukkah lamp (*Look at Me: I Can Celebrate Hanukkah*, p. 4).
- H. **Story Time** (*Jewish ritual object, Jewish value, Hebrew words and phrases*). Many lessons lend themselves to storytelling. For example, you may wish to read the story of Creation when introducing Shabbat (*Look at Me: I Can Celebrate Shabbat*, p. 2). Check out *God's Garden: Children's Stories Grown from the Bible* (Behrman House 1999) for story ideas and discussion questions.

With every lesson, be sure to ask the **Look at Me Bear Question**. The *Look at Me* bears, located at the bottom of certain pages, pose open-ended questions or challenge the children to a physical activity. Feel free to expand on these questions, or look to these questions as jumping off points for class-wide activities.

4. Activities for *Look at Me: I Can Do a Mitzvah*

Look at Me: I Can Do a Mitzvah introduces the concept of mitzvah. The booklet explores seven topics: **Mitzvah, Tzedakah, Honor Your Parents, Respect for Others, Shalom, Taking Care of God's World, and Talmud Torah.**

Mitzvah (pages 2-3)

A mitzvah is one of God's rules. Explain to the children that we can all do mitzvot (plural of "mitzvah") every day, for example, by welcoming a friend. You might also pick a uniquely Jewish mitzvah, such as lighting Shabbat candles on Friday night.

- ? **Discussion Question:** What mitzvot do you do already?
- ✓ **Activity: Mitzvah Chart.** Consider creating a Mitzvah Chart—a poster that lists the mitzvot children can do while in class. When you see the children fulfilling one of the mitzvot, place a sticker on the chart next to that mitzvah. Alternatively, encourage children to tell you when another child has done a mitzvah, then add a star to the chart. When the class accumulates ten or more stars, have a Mitzvah Party with snacks. Such celebrations provide opportunities to review the meaning of mitzvah and add new ideas to the Mitzvah Chart.

Tzedakah (pages 4-5)

We give tzedakah when we give something to a person in need. Sometimes we give food to the hungry. Sometimes we give warm clothes to people who are cold. At other times, we give money, often placing that money in a tzedakah box.

- ? **Discussion Question:** Where should we donate tzedakah that we collect?
- ✓ **Activity: Class Tzedakah Box.** Before class, cover a box in plain paper. Allow the children to decorate the box. Dedicate the box as the Class Tzedakah Box. Each week, encourage parents to send tzedakah money to school with their children. When the box is full, invite the rabbi or cantor for a ceremony in which the children donate the tzedakah to the synagogue or to another cause of their choosing.

Honor Your Parents (pages 6-7)

Explain that one mitzvah each child often fulfills without realizing it is that of honoring parents. Remember to define "to honor." Possible definitions include: "to listen to" or "to treat nicely."

- ? **Discussion Question:** What nice things do you do for your parents? Do you save your mother a seat, like David in the exercise? Do you hug your dad every morning?
- ✓ **Activity: Hug Coupon.** Explain to the children that one way we honor our parents is to show them we love them by giving them a hug. Before class, cut out Hug Coupons. Let the children decorate the coupons and present them to their parents, along with a hug.

Respect for Others (pages 8-9)

One way we show respect is to listen. Another is to help people in need—like the older woman in the picture who needs help carrying her grocery bag.

- ? **Discussion Question:** When do you feel that you have shown respect to someone else?
- ✓ **Activity: Learn Sign Language.** We can show respect by saying please and thank you. Use the internet to find out how to say "please" and "thank you" using sign language. Teach the children these signs, and begin to use them every day in class.

Shalom (pages 10-11)

Explain that shalom means peace. It is a Jewish value to try to bring shalom to the world.

- ? **Discussion Question:** How can you bring shalom into your home?
- ✓ **Activity: Saying Shalom.** “Shalom” is a Hebrew word that actually has three meanings: peace, hello, and goodbye. When people enter a room, they say “shalom,” and when people leave, they say “shalom.” When people pray for peace, they also pray for “shalom.” Take a class trip around the school; ask the children to wave “shalom” to everyone they see. Go into the sanctuary and let the children pray for shalom using their quiet voices.

Taking Care of God’s World (pages 12-13)

Tell the children the biblical story of creation: God created the world in six days; on the seventh day, God rested. Now, we are partners with God and we must do our part to take care of the world.

- ? **Discussion Question:** What can you do to help take care of God’s world?
- ✓ **Activity: Field Trip.** If the synagogue has a garden or landscaping, lead the children on a field trip. Some things to point out include: the feeling of wind against their faces, the green grass, or the buzzing of an insect. Try to involve all the senses. Consider beginning the drawing exercise on page twelve after returning from the field trip.

Talmud Torah (pages 14-15)

The Torah is holy—very, very special—to the Jewish people. We read from the Torah each week. We can have fun fulfilling the mitzvah of Talmud Torah. After all, we fulfill this mitzvah by listening to stories, and the Torah is filled with exciting stories about brave Jewish men and women.

- ? **Discussion Question:** Which biblical characters can you name?
- ✓ **Activity: Torah Tales.** Reserve a time every week to read the children a story from the Torah. Consider choosing a story that teaches a particular lesson or one about a biblical character who shares a name with one of the children in the class. Check out *God’s Garden: Children’s Stories Grown from the Bible* (Behrman House 1999) for story ideas and discussion questions.

Mitzvah Path (page 16)

Congratulations! Your class has reached the end of the booklet and the Mitzvah Path.

- ✓ **Activity: Classroom Mitzvah Path.** Transform the Mitzvah Path of page 16 into a classroom exercise. Place mitzvah placards around the classroom or even the entire synagogue or religious school building. Gather the students at each mitzvah station and review the meaning of each mitzvah; you might revisit the mitzvah of Talmud Torah in the sanctuary. Celebrate at the last station.

5. Activities for *Look at Me: I Can Learn and Do in the Synagogue*

Look at Me: I Can Learn and Do in the Synagogue introduces the key vocabulary of the synagogue in addition to Jewish ritual objects, such as the ark, siddur, and Torah. The activities below explore five topics highlighted by the booklet, including: the **Sanctuary**, the **Torah and the Ten Commandments**, the **Sh'ma**, the **Jewish Wedding**, and the **Synagogue School**.

Sanctuary (pages 2-3)

Jews gather in the sanctuary to pray as a community. The Torah scrolls are also kept in the sanctuary. There are three Jewish objects highlighted on page two: the siddur, the Torah scroll, and the ark. Consider introducing the siddur and the ark with this lesson, and coordinate an introduction to the Torah scroll with the exercise on page four.

- ? **Discussion Question:** The Torah is special to the Jewish people. We place the Torah in the ark. What things are special to you, and where do you keep these things?
- ✓ **Activity: Class Trip.** Take a class trip to the sanctuary using page three as a guide. Is there a bicycle in the sanctuary? Is there a frog? Is there a Torah? An ark? Connect the illustrated objects, such as the ark, with their real life counterparts in the sanctuary.

Torah and the Ten Commandments (pages 4-5)

The Torah is very important to the Jewish people. It contains God's rules. Show the children a real Torah cover. Point out how fancy it is.

- ? **Discussion Question:** The Torah always wears its very best. When do you dress up?
- ✓ **Activity: Ten Commandments—Story Time, Counting Time.** The Torah contains God's rules. There are ten famous laws called the Ten Commandments. When we follow these laws, we treat each other with respect. Consider reading the children the biblical story of the Ten Commandments. You may also wish to use the Ten Commandments as a prompt to practice counting from one to ten. What other objects come in sets of ten? (e.g. minyan, and fingers.) Count with the children from one to ten with every set of ten they name.

Sh'ma (page 7)

The *Sh'ma* is a very important Jewish prayer. Many Jewish people say the *Sh'ma* every day to remember that there is one God. Some people say the *Sh'ma* before they fall asleep. Some people say the *Sh'ma* when they are scared.

- ? **Discussion Question:** What do you do before you go to sleep?
- ✓ **Activity: Reciting the Sh'ma.** Practice saying the *Sh'ma* as a class. Show the children how to cover their eyes. Begin to hum the tune of the *Sh'ma*, adding in the words after a few repetitions. Tell the children that many Jews say the *Sh'ma* before they go to bed. If the class is approaching a nap time or rest period, encourage the children to lie down and cover their eyes as you hum the tune of the *Sh'ma*. Let the recitation of the *Sh'ma* become part of your classroom ritual. Visit <http://www.behrmanhouse.net/hin1prayer> and click on number three to hear the *Sh'ma* read out loud.

The Jewish Wedding (pages 8-9)

While the children may have heard about weddings, they may not have experienced one firsthand. This lesson is a way to introduce them to Jewish celebrations, as well as to the rabbi, who is the leader of the synagogue and is also a teacher.

- ? **Discussion Question:** When Jewish people celebrate, they often dance and sing. What do you do when you are very happy? Do you laugh? Smile?
- ✓ **Activity: Wedding Dance.** At Jewish weddings, we dance the horah. Teach the children this circle dance. Invite parents to join in the fun.

Synagogue School (pages 10-11)

The synagogue is a place Jewish people can go to be with other Jewish people to pray, to learn, and to celebrate. One way we celebrate is to sing songs.

- ? **Discussion Question:** What happy songs do you know?
- ✓ **Activity: Sing Along.** Use page eleven as a prompt for a classroom singing session. Consider singing songs that incorporate hand motions or animal noises to encourage participation. Alternatively, sing a Hebrew or Jewish song.

6. Activities for *Look at Me: I Can Celebrate Shabbat*

Look at Me: I Can Celebrate Shabbat introduces the traditions and vocabulary of Shabbat. The booklet explores seven topics: **Creation, Shabbat, Blessings, Kiddush, Hallah, Day of Rest,** and **Havdalah.**

Creation (pages 2-3)

The Torah tells us that God created the world in six days and rested on the seventh day, Shabbat. Jewish tradition teaches that we are partners with God in creation. God created the apples we use to make apple pie, the trees we use to build houses, and the water that flows through our sinks.

- ? **Discussion Question:** How are we partners with God in creation?
- ✓ **Activity: I Spy...Something God and People Create Together.** Looking around the classroom, find objects that demonstrate the creative partnership between God and people, such as the paper the children color or the orange juice they drink at snack time. Begin a game of “I Spy” using similar objects around the classroom. After the children discover each object, ask them, “Who created this object?” Challenge them to consider how people use God’s creations to make new creations

Shabbat (pages 4-5)

Shabbat is a holiday that we celebrate every week. Like other Jewish holidays, Shabbat begins after the sun goes down. When the sun goes down, the sky is filled with beautiful colors—reds, oranges, and yellows. Sundown is a quiet part of the day, and we welcome Shabbat during this beautiful and quiet moment.

- ? **Discussion Questions:** When does the sun rise? When does the sun go down?
- ✓ **Activity: Shabbat Skies.** Discussions about sun down lend themselves to finger painting exercises. Encourage the children to use finger paints to depict the sky at sundown—swirls of bright colors. You might show them pictures of sundown as models. Consider using the paintings to decorate the classroom for Shabbat or send them home with the children along with a note explaining the connection between Shabbat and sun down.

Blessings (pages 6-7)

We welcome Shabbat by saying three blessings. We say blessings over the Shabbat candles, over the wine we use for Kiddush, and over hallah, the braided Shabbat bread. Blessings are our way of saying thank you to God. To hear the blessings read aloud, visit www.behrmanhouse.net/hin1prayer and click on number seven.

- ? **Discussion Question:** What would you like to thank God for?
- ✓ **Activity: Todah Rabah (Thank You Very Much).** Every week, we thank God for Shabbat and for creating the world. Make thanking God part of your weekly Shabbat celebration. Every Friday, let the children take turns say “thank you very much”—*todah rabah* in Hebrew—to God for something God created, such as the flowers which make the garden pretty or the water that fills up swimming pools.

Kiddush (pages 8-9)

Kiddush is the blessing we say over wine or grape juice. We thank God for creating “the fruit of the vine”—grapes. We partner with God in creation when we use the grapes to make grape juice.

- ? **Discussion Questions:** What other types of food and drinks can we make from grapes?
- ✓ **Activity: Juice Break With God.** Use snack time as an opportunity to talk about people’s partnership with God. You might begin such a discussion by asking the children, “who creates grape juice?” You might also bring in other foods made from grapes, such as grape jelly, grape candy, or fruit salad, to expand the discussion.

Hallah (pages 10-11)

Hallah is the sweet and braided bread that we eat on Shabbat—the same type of bread that our grandparents and great-grandparents have eaten on Shabbat for hundreds of years. Hallah is fluffy, sweet, and a real Shabbat treat!

- ? **Discussion Questions:** What do we see on the Shabbat table?
- ✓ **Activity: Setting the Shabbat Table.** Use the illustration on page eleven to begin a discussion about what the children will see on the Shabbat table. By this page, they will have already been introduced to Shabbat candles, the Kiddush cup, and Hallah. You might also introduce the custom of inviting guests, including cousins and grandparents, to Shabbat meals. Make setting the Shabbat table a classroom ritual. Each week, let the children set their

classroom Shabbat table with Shabbat items and invite guests to join their Shabbat celebration.

Day of Rest (pages 12-13)

Shabbat is the Day of Rest. Many Jews spend Shabbat doing restful activities. They read, go to synagogue, pray, and sing songs. Restful activities can be quiet activities or activities you do by yourself. They can also be joyful activities where people treat each other with respect.

- ? **Discussion Question:** What are some restful activities you can do on Shabbat?
- ✓ **Activity: Shabbat Sing Along.** Teach the children Shabbat songs, such as *Shalom Chaverim* and *Shabbat Shalom Hay!* For ideas and lyrics, visit www.totshabbat.com, or check out *Day of Days: Creating Family Shabbat Through Song* on www.behrmanhouse.com.

Havdalah (pages 14-15) and Back Cover

Havdalah means separation. This ceremony separates Shabbat from the rest of the week. On Saturday night, when three stars appear in the sky, we say goodbye to Shabbat with Havdalah. We light a multi-wicked Havdalah candle, say a blessing over wine or grape juice, and smell the Havdalah spices, *besamim*.

- ? **Discussion Question:** Which senses do we use during Havdalah? During all of Shabbat?
- ✓ **Activity: Shabbat Sense Stations.** Bring the back cover of the booklet to life by organizing an in-class sensory experience. Set up Shabbat-themed “sense stations”(see table).

Sense	Shabbat Item
Sight	Shabbat candles
Hearing	Stereo playing Shabbat melodies
Tasting	Grape juice
Touching	Hallah
Smelling	Spices

7. Activities for *Look at Me: I Can Celebrate Hanukkah*

Look at Me: I Can Celebrate Hanukkah introduces children to the traditions and vocabulary of Hanukkah. The booklet explores six topics: **Hanukkah, Menorah, Blessings, Latkes, Dreidel, and Giving Gifts.**

Hanukkah (pages 2-3)

On Hanukkah, we read the story of Judah Maccabee and the miracle of the Temple oil that lasted eight days. We celebrate the victory of the small Jewish nation over their Greek rulers who would not let them practice Judaism. The Hebrew word for “miracle” is *nes* (נס); it appears on the blue oil jug on page three.

- ? **Discussion Question:** What is one miracle of Hanukkah?
- ✓ **Activity: Hide the Oil.** Before class, hide a bottle of olive oil or a picture of an oil jug. You may wish to decorate the outside of the bottle with Hanukkah symbols. During class, read the story of Hanukkah to the class. Then, challenge the children—little Maccabees—to find the oil that you’ve hidden. Consider hiding other Hanukkah objects around the room, such as a stuffed dreidel or a Hanukkah menorah. Have the children name each object as they find it.

Menorah (pages 4-5)

On Hanukkah, we light a menorah. In modern Hebrew, *menorah* literally means a “light” or “lamp.” You might also hear the Hanukkah lamp called a *hanukkiyah*. Many people distinguish between a *menorah* (with seven branches, including the shamash) and a *hanukkiyah* (with nine branches, including the shamash). The shamash is the helper candle. Throughout Jewish history, the term “shamash” has also referred to someone who helps in the synagogue and assists the rabbi in community affairs.

- ? **Discussion Questions:** How can we be like the shamash and help others to shine?
- ✓ **Activity: Class Shamash.** The shamash is the helper candle. We use the shamash to light the other candles. Each day of Hanukkah, choose a child to be the “class shamash” and the teacher’s helper for the day. Let the class shamash help set up for snack time or stand at the front of the line. You might consider appointing a class shamash even when Hanukkah is over. For example, every Friday a shamash can help you set up for *Kabbalat Shabbat*.

Blessings (pages 6-7)

We say the Hanukkah blessings as we light the Hanukkah candles. The Hanukkah blessings thank God for the miracles of Hanukkah—for letting the Jewish people continue to thrive.

- ? **Discussion Questions:** When else do we light candles to begin a holiday?
- ✓ **Activity: Parent-and-Child Learning Session.** Consider inviting parents to join their children in a learning session devoted to the Hanukkah blessings. Allow parents and children to learn and grow together. You may wish to invite the cantor to teach the blessings and some Hanukkah songs. To hear the Hanukkah blessings read and sung, visit www.behrmanhouse.net/hin1prayer and click on number eight.

You may also wish to teach the children and their families the order of lighting Hanukkah candles. Place the candles in the Hanukkah menorah from right to left facing us. Use the flame of the shamash to light the newest candle first—from left to right facing us.

Latkes (pages 8-9)

Latkes are a Hanukkah treat. Fried in oil, they remind us of the miracle of the Hanukkah oil that lasted for eight days in the ancient Temple. Sephardic Jews also eat jelly doughnuts called *sufganiyot*.

- ? **Discussion Question:** How is the food we eat on Hanukkah different from the food we eat on other Jewish holidays, like Shabbat, Rosh HaShanah, or Purim?
- ✓ **Activity: Latke Bash.** Invite parents to a “Latke Bash.” Encourage parents to volunteer to help set up, fry latkes, and make (or buy) *sufganiyot*. At the party, you can sing Hanukkah songs. The children can play dreidel and practice the Hanukkah Twist (see below). Invite different classes to lead different parts of the Latke Bash, such as candle lighting and saying the blessings.

Dreidel (pages 10-11)

A dreidel is a spinning top. It comes from the Yiddish word which means “to spin.” The Hebrew word for dreidel is *sevivon*. The root of *sevivon* also related to spinning. There are four Hebrew letters on the dreidel: nun n), gimmel g, hay h, and shin v. The letters stand for: *nes gadol hayah sham* (a great miracle happened there).

- ? **Discussion Questions:** What other objects spin like dreidels?
- ✓ **Activity: Hanukkah Twist.** Let the children pretend to be dreidels. Play the song “Let’s Twist Again” or sing “I Have a Little Dreidel” or “*Sevivon, Sov, Sov, Sov.*” While the music is playing or you are singing, invite the children to dance, spin, and twist like dreidels. When the music stops, it’s time to freeze.

Giving Gifts

Today, Hanukkah is a time of giving and sharing. On Hanukkah, many families give each other chocolate Hanukkah *gelt*—coins. Some families share small, fun gifts. Not all gifts must be physical, though, just as the miracles of Hanukkah were not. This Hanukkah, encourage children and families to remember that Hanukkah is a time of giving and saying thank you for our freedom to be Jewish.

- ? **Discussion Question:** What makes you happy to be Jewish?
- ✓ **Activity: Hanukkah Singing Telegram.** Teach the children a Hanukkah song. Take a class trip to your school director’s office and allow the children to give the director a Hanukkah gift: their song. Let the children say thank you to the school director for everything he or she does.

7. Activities for Parents and the Home

Encourage parents to reinforce their children’s class lessons by reviewing the *Look at Me* booklets with their children using the following four techniques:

- A. **Send home each *Look at Me*** when the children have completed the booklet. Encourage parents to read through the booklet with their children before bedtime.
- B. **Explain the Hebrew words** that children will encounter in class. Provide parents with a list of the words along with their pronunciation and definition. Encourage parents to incorporate these words, such as “shalom” or “tzedakah” into their vocabulary.
- C. **Welcome parents into the classroom** by inviting them to holiday parties. For example, coordinate a lesson on Talmud Torah with Sim at Torah, and invite parents to celebrate the holiday with their children in class. Invite parents to read a holiday story to the children, to lead a crafts activity (e.g. making mini-flags on Sim at Torah), or to bring in their own Jewish ritual objects for show and tell (e.g. one of their family’s Kiddush cup).
- D. **Introduce parents to www.behrmanhouse.com/family**, where they will find additional tools for bringing Jewish education into the home, along with pronunciation guides and activities to reinforce Hebrew vocabulary and prayers. (Teachers might also visit www.behrmanhouse.com/fortheed for a wide variety of teaching tips and curriculum ideas.)