



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
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Blue Monday and Friends: Traditional Jewish Holidays Come Alive through the Art of Story-Telling

Curriculum Unit 97.02.07
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Introduction :

Family tradition steeped in history becomes the basis of enrichment and enlightenment as young children gather information about traditional Jewish holidays through the aid of a puppet. Are children able to capture the significance of their own family traditions holding onto precious memories and passing them onto future generations? Do children ever look beyond their own cultural traditions with a sense of awe and appreciation?

With these thoughts in mind, my paper will explore ways in which puppetry and the art of story-telling, via children's literature, can be integrated into a unit for helping young children gather information for appreciating and approaching literature in a more critical manner. As a key component to my unit, I would like to emphasize the active participation of children in analyzing historical significance in children's books.

To name a few, books such as Isaac Bashevis Singer's *Zlateh The Goat And Other Stories* , Malka Drucker's *A Jewish Holiday ABC* and *Grandma's Latkes* , and Janice Cohn's *The Christmas Menorahs: How a Town Fought Hate* will be used for developing strategies and classroom activities for assimilating and analyzing children's literature. More specifically the unit will include activities suitable for children in kindergarten through third grades. Along with reading and the language arts, the lesson plans will cover curriculum areas such as math, social studies, science, music and art.

I have been involved in the art of ventriloquism for many years, having developed a family of characters with unique personalities, interesting voice variations, and a flair for bright colorful appearances. Along with my family of characters, several classroom puppets have developed bringing their own magical charms into the first grade curriculum through the art of story-telling. For example, there is Willie Sunday, a delightful puppet, appealing to children of all age groups. His main area of expertise puts him in the front seat of our phonics program, bringing stories through his friend, Soundie; missing letters and letter sounds to the children's squeals of delight; and acquiring their support in being able to take a risk and try again. He also takes us on a journey through the early times of Native Americans, helping us to gather information for critical analysis of the Disney film, "Pocahontas." Then there is Tuesday's Cup of Sugar and Alphabet Thursday who are ardent supporters of our writing for reading curriculum in our class. Of course, Wednesday Delight and Friday Fantastic cannot be overlooked for their assistance in introducing poetry and journal writing.

Now waiting in the wings is Blue Monday. He has developed into a character but has had no active role in our classroom nor its curriculum. While he and I were discussing this unintentional dilemma, he came up with the idea that he would gather all of his magical dust that he could to help to keep the children motivated, excited, and lured (well, at least for one or two week segments throughout the year) into gathering information and experiencing traditions based on Jewish holidays. Through these experiences, it is his intent to help young children gain an appreciation for their own traditions and at the same time gain an appreciation beyond their own cultural identity by being introduced to a variety of children's literature expressing Jewish holiday traditions.

I am a teacher in the first grade classroom at L. W. Beecher School on Jewell Street in New Haven. My classroom contains approximately 26 children from a variety of ethnic backgrounds with varying abilities in the six to eight year old age range. Along with a need for improved vocabulary, many children exhibit poor self-images and have difficulty conveying their thoughts and feelings. It is my intent to help the children in being able to draw upon their inner strengths, while enhancing their academic skills and strengthening their overall social-emotional development.

Objectives:@Text:My overall objectives for my curriculum unit are:

- (1) To provide an interactive experience through the use of puppetry and children's literature in:
 - a. self-expression
 - b. small groups of two or four
 - c. whole group interaction
- (2) To provide a classroom environment whereby children will receive stimulating intellectual and cognitive development.
 - a. with creative puppetry
 - b. through published works and illustrations
 - c. through arts and crafts
- (3) To improve auditory reading and listening skills of participants through:
 - a. written language
 - b. oral language
- (4) To encourage the children to develop self-assurance while participating in classroom activities:
 - a. as listeners
 - b. as narrators
- (5) To help the children learn about Jewish culture through the study of Jewish holidays and their functions.
 - a. through children's literature
 - b. through arts and crafts
 - c. by participating in a drama
- (6) To connect the unit with the classroom curriculum
 - a. integrating the unit with language arts/reading
 - b. integrating the unit with science and social studies
 - c. integrating the unit with social development

Strategies:

Blue Monday is a puppet who resides in a multi-colored drawstring bag perched on top of a classroom closet shelf. You might ask: "What could possibly be so intriguing, exhilarating, or even worth the energy to pull oneself out of a Monday morning slump, about a puppet, limp and raggedy, collecting dust on a closet shelf." Well, allow Blue Monday to make his entrance and you'll soon discover a classroom of excited first graders forgetting all about the fact that a few hours earlier while in bed they never wanted to set foot in school again. All eyes turn to Blue Monday, whose azure blue face, hot pink hair, and high pitched, nasal voice capture their attention—what could possibly happen next? As if he were reading their young minds, Blue Monday announces: "We are going to build our very own Sukkah." Although they come very close to thinking that this puppet finally flipped out, they are now convinced. However, like all puppets, (who, of course, have everything neatly organized and set up, including their own choice of books, activities, etc.), Blue Monday pulls out of his bag several children's books showing beautiful colored pictures of various huts used in the celebration of the fall harvest, including *Tamar's Sukkah* by Ellie Gellman. The children soon learn that many years ago the Jewish people built huts in the fields after the fall harvest for a time of celebration. Excitement builds as they discover that they will not only help in building a little hut, but will help to decorate the hut with illustrations of fruits and vegetables. I wonder how many children would fit in our hut—let's estimate and then fill the hut with first grade bodies. Perhaps we'll estimate how many teachers or parents would fit in our hut too. We may even learn to multiply and not know it by estimating how many bodies would fit into four or five huts.

It begins to get cold as fall passes and winter approaches; one very cold December day the children are certain Blue Monday has lost his "cool" as he proceeds to tell the class that while they were enjoying physical education he was busy helping Mrs. Martin fry potato pancakes. He soon brings a hush to the classroom as he proceeds to read the story, *Grandma's Latkes*. The children learn that the cooking oil used in frying the latkes represents the oil in the exciting story about the Maccabees and the miracle of the oil lighting the menorah. However, before we venture too far on our journey with Jewish culture, it will be important that the children learn something about the country of Israel—its topography, location on the globe, important cities, etc. They will, of course, discover that Jews live in many places around the world including our own country of America.

Our books and activities will integrate with the seasons, somewhat following the Jewish calendar; for example, the children will learn about Passover during the spring. Since January does not have celebrations that we will be actively involved with, Isaac Bashevis Singer's stories will be used during story time in the classroom. During the month of February we will look at our own family traditions and use this section for a culminating activity during late spring. This section will be entitled, "Acceptance Through Family Traditions." The children will learn that family traditions are unique, special, and filled with fun activities that may have been passed on from many generations in the past. Children will interview parents, grandparents, or another personal friend of the family, compiling a book of stories and pictures. Books such as *Molly's Pilgrim* and *The Keeping Quilt* will be used in this section along with activities where children are paired and discuss themes from the book then report back to class. During a school-wide assembly, the children will read their thoughts about their interview while their invited family member joins them on stage.

It is important to keep in mind that the historical significance behind the stories found in my unit have their origin in the Bible. Therefore, several passages will be read from the Bible, (e.g. the passover story is found in the book of Exodus, chapters seven through fourteen, and the book of Esther explains the story of the celebration of Purim.)

My unit will be part of a team effort including teachers from L. W. Beecher school whereby we will help students and the community at large to better understand cultural diversity on a more global level through

the use of literature.

Holidays Through Literature

"Sukkah" The Hebrew word "sukkah" means booth or tent. It is a celebration of the ancient Jews escaping slavery from Egypt. As the people wandered in the wilderness, they made huts for shelter using branches for the sides and top. After they settled in Canaan, Jewish farmers made rough huts in the fields and stayed in them while they brought in their crops. The celebration reminds Jews of their ancient ancestors difficult times in the land of Egypt. It is also a time for giving thanks for the harvest. Sukkah is celebrated a few days after Yom Kippur during the month of October and lasts for eight days. Jewish families meet in synagogues and thank God for all the things that have grown during the past year. Outside the synagogue, a hut is built from wood. Tree branches are placed on the sides and twigs on the top so the stars can be seen. Then fresh fruit and vegetables are hung in the hut. Sometimes families build huts in their back yards and eat their meals in them.

(Day One—"Monday"—First Week of October)

First graders find it difficult to differentiate between city, state and country. It becomes even more difficult for those who have had few experiences beyond their immediate community. As an introduction to our unit and my first lesson, Blue Monday will help the children locate our country and state on the globe. From here we will find the country of Israel. Blue Monday will tell the children that the ancient Jews lived in the country of Israel. However, today Jews live in all parts of the world, including the country of Israel. The globe will be passed around the group so that the children can pinpoint their own country and state in relation to the country of Israel.

Blue Monday will introduce our unit about Jewish holidays, telling the children about the ancient sukkahs and how they were built in the wilderness and fields for harvesting. He will tell the children about the traditional holiday and how it is celebrated today. A delightful book, *Tamar's Sukkah*, written by Ellie Gellman will be read to the children by Blue Monday. In the book, a young girl helps to build a sukkah with the help of the neighborhood children. All of the children have ideas about where to find things and how things should be placed in the sukkah. In the end, the children have their own celebration of apple juice and cookies.

Discussion of the book will center around the children working together to build their sukkah. Blue Monday will help the children decide what they would like to include in their sukkah when they build one the following day. Perhaps a miniature one could be built in the classroom using cardboard rolls from paper towels before building a sukkah on the school playground.

The children will keep a daily journal, recording information that they have studied, along with maps, pictures and any other materials from the lessons.

(Day Two and Three—Tuesday and Wednesday)

The children will be busy making and cutting fruits and vegetables from paper. These will be attached to strings so that we can hang them in our sukkah. We will take a walk to a local park to gather twigs and branches for our sukkah's sides and top. With the help of the Grove Students, (i.e. students who come to our class from a residential high school in the town of Madison,) we will build a sukkah and place our fruits and vegetables inside. Back in the classroom, we will conclude our study with a celebration of cookies and apples.

"Hanukkah" A long time ago there lived a king whose name was Antiochus. He was the king of Syria and ruled

in that country more than 2,000 years ago. He made a law that all people including the Jews must worship his gods or they would be severely punished. Some of the Jews were afraid and followed his orders. Others did not, such as Mattathias and his five sons. They along with other Jews began a war with the King of Syria that lasted for three years. Finally, a son of Mattathias, Judah the Maccabee, led the army to victory and freedom for the Jews to pray to their God. However, when the people went into the temple to pray, they discovered that everything had been broken and utterly destroyed. As they began to clean up the temple, oil was discovered to light the menorah. However, there was only enough oil to burn for one day. When the lamp was lit, they were amazed that it lasted for eight days. Today, the menorah holds nine candles. The shamash, a leader candle, is used to light a candle each night for eight days. Jewish families celebrate the victory of the Maccabees and their freedom to worship their God. Potato pancakes, called "latkes," fried in oil are enjoyed along with playing a game, using a dreidel.

(Day One—Monday—First Week of December)

Blue Monday will introduce Hanukkah to the children by reading Malka Drucker's book, *Grandma's Latkes*. In the book a little grandchild, Molly, helps her grandma make potato pancakes. As the two of them make the latkes, the ancient story unfolds. Molly asks questions about her ancestors and why the latkes are eaten during Hanukkah. Grandma tells Molly about the Jews and how they lived as farmers in Israel, eating many potatoes and other fruits and vegetables as well. When Molly asks Grandma if they had Hanukkah, Grandma tells her about the Maccabees and their victory. As the oil is poured into the pan, Grandma is at the point in the story where enough oil was found to light the menorah for one day. By the time the latkes are finished, Grandma has concluded the miracle part in the story and tells Molly that she is her miracle.

Blue Monday will ask the children if any of their grandmas or grandpas ever told them stories while they were cooking. Perhaps they told stories of special events when they were small. The children will share the stories with Blue Monday. He will ask the children why Grandma said that Molly was her miracle.

Grandma's recipe for making the latkes is included in Drucker's book. As a conclusion to our lesson, the children will enjoy helping to make latkes in the classroom.

(Day Two—Tuesday)

Two books of reference will be placed in our classroom. They are *Hanukkah Lights, Hanukkah Nights* by Leslie Kimmelman and *All About Hanukkah* by Judy Groner and Madeline Wikler. Kimmelman's book is an easy reader that describes a family's celebration of Hanukkah. *All About Hanukkah* is a beautiful book with colorful pictures describing the ancient story of the Maccabees.

Today will be an exciting day. Blue Monday will introduce the children to our special guest, Joyce Romano. She will bring her own menorah and show the children the shamash or leader candle that helps her to light the menorah. Excitement will continue to build as Mrs. Romano tells the children about the game they will be playing in small groups with a dreidel. Each side contains a Hebrew letter, standing for a Hebrew word, and everyone hopes that his dreidel will stop on Gimmel where the player takes everything in the middle. Mrs. Romano will explain to the children that their gelt will be candy.

(Day Three—Wednesday)

Blue Monday begins our lesson with a class discussion. He asks the children if they know of anyone on their street or nearby streets that seem to be different from their families. Maybe they do things differently;

perhaps they go to church on a different day from their family; maybe they wear different clothes from their family. Blue Monday tells the children that sometimes people do not like or appreciate when others seem different and that sometimes those feelings can lead to hate. Janice Cohn's book, *The Christmas Menorahs: How A Town Fought Hate*, will be read by Blue Monday. It is a very emotional book that involves a Jewish family from Billings, Montana. During the Hanukkah season, the Schnitzers' home glows from the menorahs placed in their windows. Suddenly, without warning and seemingly for no apparent reason, a rock is hurled through the bedroom window of young Isaac. His father explains that it is because they are Jews. The people of Billings rally around the Schnitzer family and soon after many families join in placing paper menorahs in their windows.

The children will be placed into small groups, having a child designated as a recorder in each one. They will be asked to discuss questions prepared before class, record their comments, and report back to the whole group. Questions will center around the townspeople's response to the Schnitzers' family. Would you have placed a menorah in your window to show support for the Schnitzer family? Why or why not? Could the townspeople have shown their support in other ways? How would you show your support to a family who is facing similar difficulties in your community?

A nice sequel to Janice Cohn's book will be *Elijah's Angel*. Blue Monday will lead the children in a discussion about the differences between Hanukkah and Christmas. The children will discover through the reading of *Elijah's Angel* how a young Jewish boy finds a friend of a different faith, race, and age group. In conclusion, a discussion will center around different people in our neighborhoods and how we can be friends and live in peace.

(Day Four—Thursday)

Our discussion will center around elderly folk and their importance in the lives of the children. Blue Monday will ask the children about their grandparents and great-grandparents, encouraging them to tell about happy experiences they have shared with them. The puppet will explain that today's story is an old tale written by Lillian Ross. In her book, *The Little Old Man and His Dreams*, an elderly grandfather travels to his granddaughter Shoshanna's wedding with his deceased wife's pearls in his pockets. Shoshanna is to be wed on the first night of Hanukkah. However, the little old man encounters many difficulties during a very bad snowstorm. He becomes very ill and robbers take all but one of the pearls. During these encounters, he dreams about meeting a King. In that dream he is granted his wish of seeing his granddaughter married. Finally he meets his granddaughter and participates in the wedding celebration. A final dream takes the little old man to the King where he lives happily ever after with his own Shoshanna.

(Day Five—Friday)

The children will be busy today, drawing and coloring pictures for their elderly friends. They will be visiting a Jewish home for the elderly in our community, taking their pictures with them, as well as a small package of cookies for their new friends. The children will be asked to interview an elderly friend, asking them what they liked best about Hanukkah? After our return to school, the children will write about their experiences at the home.

(Week Two—Monday Through Friday)

This week we will center our thoughts and attention around a chapter book, *Journey to America* by Sonia Levitin. Although the book was written for children in the fourth through eighth grades, it is an exciting book

that first graders will enjoy if told to them. The book centers around the Platt family escaping to America from Germany when the Nazis were in power. Lisa Platt's father leaves for America during the middle of the night. When he acquires enough money, he promises to send for Lisa, her mother and two sisters. Until then, the family escapes to Switzerland where they live in dire poverty and experience many hardships.

"Folk Tales"

(January)

During the month of January, Blue Monday will assist in telling stories from *Zlateh The Goat And Other Stories* by Isaac Bashevis Singer. The book contains numerous tales from a village called Chelm. Sometimes the people in Chelm do foolish things that are hilariously funny such as sisters mixing up their feet in bed, or a husband thinking he has poisoned himself by eating his wife's sweet jam. The seven elders appearing wise to the village folk give such simple wisdom that one almost believes they have magic up their sleeves. A favorite tale and one from which the book is named is "Zlateh the Goat." It is almost Hanukkah and Aaron is on his way to a nearby village to sell the family's goat. The goat is being sold because the family is very poor and there doesn't seem to be any alternative. On the way, Aaron and Zlateh encounter a blinding blizzard and found refuge in a farmer's haystack. For three days Zlateh provides warmth and nourishment for Aaron while Aaron gives her reassuring love. At the end of the story the father gets work again and Zlateh stays with the family.

As a culminating activity, the children will write their own humorous tale, stretching their imaginations for making someone look foolish. Blue Monday usually reads to the children. However, the tables will be turned and now the children will read to Blue Monday.

"Acceptance Through Family Traditions"

(Days One and Two—Monday and Tuesday—First Week of February)

Blue Monday will introduce *Molly's Pilgrim* by Barbara Cohen. He will tell them that in the picture on the cover Molly is holding a very special doll made by her mother. He will ask the children if they have ever had something given to them that was very special, something they loved and cherished very much. The children will tell the puppet about those experiences. During the discussion, Blue Monday will ask if anyone ever experienced being laughed at for cherishing a special gift. Did the person understand who made it or where it came from?

Molly and her family move from Russia to America. Molly is made fun of in school for her accent and clothes. The teacher asks everyone to make a pilgrim for Thanksgiving. Molly's mother makes a doll that looks like a Russian peasant girl. Molly knows the doll is beautiful but she is afraid her classmates will not understand and she wants desperately to fit in with her class. Before reading the book, Blue Monday will ask the children if they feel Molly should take the doll to school. Do you think the children will accept Molly's doll? Why or why not?

After reading the book, the children will gather in pairs and discuss how they would help Molly to feel more comfortable in school or maybe outside of school. The children will share their responses with the larger group.

(Day Three—Wednesday)

The Keeping Quilt by Patricia Polacco will be read in our first grade class. Blue Monday will center his

discussion around quilts, asking the children if they know the meaning of the word "quilt." What do you think a "keeping quilt" could be? Blue Monday will show pictures of the quilt from the book. He will ask the children why they think the quilt has pictures of trees and animals. Does the quilt tell us about the family and where they lived in Russia?

Great-Grandma Anna comes to America from Russia, knowing no English and dresses in her farm clothes as she has in Russia. Mother makes a quilt out of her outgrown dress along with a few clothes from her uncles and aunt. The quilt, according to Anna's mother, reminds the family about their home in Russia. The quilt passes from family to family until it passes from three generations and is used at births, weddings and birthdays.

As a culminating activity, the children will be asked to interview a family member, either a parent, grandparent, uncle, or aunt. They will talk about a special family tradition that was passed down from generation to generation. How did the family tradition begin? Where does it take place? Are there special objects involved such as the "keeping quilt?" Is the tradition connected with a special holiday? The children will write a paragraph or two and will be asked to bring pictures to school showing a special activity involving the family tradition. During our school-wide assembly the children will share their paragraphs on stage along with their family member. Family pictures will be projected on a screen with an opaque projector.

The children will draw pictures on a piece of white fabric using magic markers or fabric crayons. The fabric patches will be pieced together and made into a large quilt for display in our school.

"Purim" Purim is a happy holiday that celebrates the life of a queen named Esther. About 2,500 years ago, there was a King of Persia who wanted a new wife. He held a beauty contest and Esther was chosen as the new queen. The king did not know that Esther was Jewish. Her legal guardian and cousin, Mordecai, told her not to tell the king. He was afraid that if the king knew then he would not marry Esther. One day after the king had married Esther, Mordecai overheard two soldiers tell how they were going to kill the king. Mordecai told the king's officers about their plan and the king's life was saved. For this, Mordecai's name was recorded in the king's royal book of records. Sometime later, Haman, the king's chief advisor became very angry with Mordecai for not bowing down before him. He decided that Mordecai must die along with the other Jews living in Persia. Haman decided when that day would be by casting lots. He probably did this by throwing dice or small stones onto the ground. The word "Purim" comes from the ancient word "lots." Mordecai went to Queen Esther and asked her to tell the king that she was a Jew. He felt that if the king knew that Queen Esther was Jewish then he would free the Jews. At first Queen Esther was afraid. She told Mordecai to pray while she thought of a plan. Queen Esther invited both Haman and the king to a banquet. At the banquet, Queen Esther told the king about Haman's plan to kill the Jews and that she would have to be killed also because she was a Jew. The king remembered how Mordecai had helped to save his life. He was very angry and had Haman hanged. Mordecai became the new chief advisor to the king. Today Jewish families celebrate Purim with a special feast. A popular treat called hamantaschen is served. It is a little cake filled with honey, poppy seeds, or prunes.

(Day One—Monday—First Week of March)

Blue Monday will assist in telling the story about Queen Esther. The book of Esther in the Bible along with Dianne MacMillan's *Jewish Holidays in the Spring* and Margery Cuyler's *Jewish Holidays* will be used as reference books in our classroom. Along with today's story, the children will help in casting lots on the school playground. We will place numbers or days of the week on the school ground. The children will keep a record as classmates throw small stones on the numbers. The number receiving the most stones becomes the day

that we share a treat of hamantaschen.

(Days Two Through Five—Tuesday Through Friday)

The children will write their own version of "Queen Esther." Blue Monday will present a Queen Esther puppet, giving suggestions for making a puppet, using a paper bag as a base and odds and ends of fabric and yarn for the clothing and hair. The children will use their own puppets and read their stories to their classmates in class.

(Note: A skit has been prepared for the After School Program entitled, "Queen Esther." The short play will be performed during our school-wide assembly program in the late spring. See appendix)

(Days Six Through Eight—Monday through Wednesday—Second Week)

Fran Arrick's *Chernowitz!* will be used over the next several days as a basis for our discussion on prejudice. Although the book is written for students in the fourth through ninth grades, first graders can gain an understanding of the book's theme on anti-Semitism by having parts of the book told to them. Blue Monday will assist in our discussion on prejudice by asking the children if anyone ever called them or their families names that were unkind. He will ask the children how they or their parents handled those situations. In our story, Bobby becomes very hurt because his best friends side with a bully who lead a campaign of prejudice and hate towards Bobby because he is a Jew. The children will learn that anti-Semitism does not stop at the school; the family becomes a victim, also, by receiving a burning cross and swastika painted onto their car. Bobby does not want to share his feelings of hurt and ostracization from his friends with his parents. He feels that the situation is his problem. However, when Bobby takes matters into his own hands and plans revenge, he finally discovers that prejudice is bigger than he can handle. His plan does not help to dissipate the hurt and depression he is feeling inside.

First graders will gather into small groups where they will be given various situations to discuss. For example: "Suppose someone tells you that you may not play with them in a game of jump rope because you go to Sunday School. Or, perhaps someone said that your mother looked funny because she was Native American." How would you feel? How would you respond to the situation?" A recorder from each group will report the small groups' discussion back to the larger group.

"Passover" More than three thousand years ago, Jews were slaves in the country of Egypt. King Pharaoh did not want to leave the Jews leave his country because they helped to build his huge buildings, plowed his fields and were servants in the Egyptian homes. One day God sent two messengers, Moses and his brother Aaron, to tell the king that he should free the Jews. However, King Pharaoh did not want to lose his servants. He did not want the people to go. Because of this, the Egyptian people were punished with ten plagues: the river turned to blood; frogs covered the land; the Egyptians and their cattle were covered with lice; flies covered the land; the Egyptian's cattle died; boils broke out on the Egyptian's skin; hail ruined all of the crops; locusts covered the land; darkness covered the land; the first-born child of every Egyptian family died. The tenth plague was by far the worse and the king decided to let the Jews go. The people had to pack quickly. They baked Matzoh, unleavened bread, because there was no time to let the dough rise. After a few days, the king decided that he wanted the people back and sent his soldiers after them. The Jews got as far as the Red Sea and then they were trapped. Moses held up his rod over the Red Sea and the waters parted the sea causing a dry path for the people to walk on. As the soldiers followed, the sea closed and they were drowned. The Jews were free.

(Day One—Monday—First Week of April)

We will discuss several words relating to Passover before we begin our story for the day. For example, the children will learn that Seder is a traditional feast held on the first night and sometimes the second night of Passover. The Torah is a scroll on which the first five books of Moses are written in Hebrew. It also contains Jewish literature and traditions. Blue Monday will assist in telling the Passover story. Several passages from the book of Exodus in the Bible along with Maida Silverman's book, *Festival of Freedom: The Story of Passover* will be used in helping to tell the story. Silverman's book tells the story of the exodus from Egypt beginning with the birth of Moses, the parting of the Red Sea, and the celebration of freedom from slavery.

(Day Two—Tuesday)

Today Blue Monday will tell the children that they will sample a few foods that are eaten during the Seder meal. The foods are a reminder of the flight of the Jews from Egypt. For example, we will eat a hard boiled egg standing for the strength of the Jews as they endured the slavery of Egypt and dip celery into salt water which stands for the tears shed by the Jews.

(Day Three—Wednesday)

Leslie Swartz's *A First Passover* will be introduced by Blue Monday. He will ask the children if any of their parents, grandparents, or great-grandparents came from another country. The discussion will center around any child's family who came to this country. How do you think it must have felt to be a stranger in a foreign land? What might be different from your homeland? Where would you go for help? Blue Monday will tell the children that today's story involves a Jewish family living in Russia and how they came to America to find freedom to worship. The story will remind us of the special things that we like to do with our families.

Malka Drucker's *A Jewish Holiday ABC* and *The Four Questions* by Ori Sherman and Lynne Sharon Schwartz will be on display in our classroom and used as reference books. Drucker's book gives information about Jewish holidays for each letter of the alphabet. The pictures are big, bright and colorful, very appealing to young children. *The Four Questions* answers the four questions that Jewish children ask at the Passover feast. It, too, contains many colorful pictures and uses animals instead of people in the pictures.

Sample Lesson Plans:

"Hanukkah" (Day One—Monday—First Week in December)

Book: Grandma's Latkes by Malka Drucker

Summary : Molly, finally old enough to help Grandma in preparing latkes for Hanukkah, learns about the dramatic story of Antiochus and the victory of the Maccabees.

Objective : First graders will enjoy a Jewish tradition told by a grandmother to a child their age as they think about stories told by their grandparents.

Procedures :

1. Puppet, Blue Monday will lead a discussion by asking the children to tell him stories or events told to them by a grandparent.
2. Blue Monday assists in reading the story, *Grandma's Latkes* .
3. Questions from the story: Why do you think Antiochus wanted the Jews to worship his gods and not their God? How would you describe Mattathias and his sons? Why didn't all of the Jews fight in his army? Do you agree that it took a lot of courage to fight in the Maccabee's army? Why? Why didn't the Jews celebrate Hanukkah in the beginning of the story?
4. The children will enjoy helping to make and eat latkes in class.
5. The children will write an essay about a story or event that was told by a grandparent. Where were you when the story was told? What happened in the story? Why was the story told to you? How did you feel? Why?

"Folk Tales" (January)

Book: Zlateh The Goat And Other Stories by Isaac Bashevis Singer

Story—"Zlateh The Goat"

Summary : It is Hanukkah and the family does not have enough money to buy candles, potatoes,, and oil for pancakes nor gifts for the children. Therefore, Aaron's father tells him to take the family's goat to town and sell him. On the way Aaron encounters a blinding blizzard, becomes lost,, and ends up in a farmer's haystack. For three days he survives on Zlateh's milk and warmth. When Aaron is rescued, there is no thought about selling Zlateh again.

Objective : The children will enjoy a simple story about a boy's survival through the loyalty of his goat as they think about a tall tale of their own.

Procedures :

1. Puppet, Blue Monday, will open a discussion by asking the children about animals or pets that are special. Did you ever have to part with a pet? Why? How did you feel?
2. Blue Monday will assist in telling the story "Zlateh The Goat."
3. The children will write a story about an animal, exaggerating the story and adding some humor to their tale. Who is your animal? Where is your animal? What did your animal do? Why did he do it? How does he feel? Why?

"Passover" (Day Three—Wednesday—First Week of April)

Book: A First Passover by Leslie Swartz

Summary : A Jewish family waits for their papers so that they can go to America. In Russia the Passover is observed in secret. Grandfather tells Nathan about the ancient flight of the Jews from Egypt to freedom. Nathan discovers that unlike the ancient Jews, he and his family will be taking a jet to their freedom in America.

Objective : First graders will enjoy a story about a young boy's preparation to America and the changes surrounding his new found freedom.

Procedures :

1. Blue Monday will ask the children to tell experiences about moving to a new place. Suppose you have to move to a new place, how do you think you would feel? How would you prepare for the move? What would be different when you arrive? Suppose you were moving to another country, how would you feel? Why? What would be different for you and your family?
2. Blue Monday will tell the children that Nathan experienced many of the frustrations they described. He will assist in telling the story, *A First Passover* .
3. Vocabulary words concerning the Passover will be described and discussed in the context of the story. For example, when Nathan explains that they will be going to Uncle Daniel's house for the Seder. We will stop and review facts surrounding the ceremonial meal held on the first and sometimes second night of Passover. In the story, Nathan explained that in America Jews do not have to close the curtains during the Passover meal. The children will discuss how this is connected to the family's freedom in America.
4. A guest speaker will come to our class and talk about their family's journey to America.

Appendix

After School Program

The After School Program meets for approximately six to eight weeks, three days a week for an hour session. Children may sign up for this program on a voluntary basis with their parent's permission. They are chosen on a first come basis until enrollment reaches approximately fifteen children.

Script—Queen Esther

"Queen Esther"

Scene I: The king's decree is announced.

Chief Servant: Extra, extra . . . The king has issued a decree, he will be holding a beauty contest this Saturday. At that time he will chose a new queen. Extra, extra . . . Read all about it!! Girls, this is your chance to become the new queen. Extra, extra . . . Read all about it!!

Scene II: The beauty contest is held on stage.

(The king sits on one side of the stage with his chief servant sitting next to him. Girls in the contest walk back and forth on the stage while the king pantomimes to his advisor, whispering and taking notes about each one. The king motions that he has made a decision. Girls are lined up at the back of the stage.)

Chief Servant: (Comes to the middle of the stage.) And now for the moment we have all been waiting for. (Opens an envelop.) The new queen is Esther!

(Esther is crowned the new queen—queen comes forward and the king places the crown on her head. They walk down the isle while music is being played and exit from the back of the auditorium.)

Scene II: This scene opens with Haman and Mordecai in deep conversation.

Haman: As the king's chief advisor I command you to bow down before me.

Mordecai: I bow down to no one but God Jehovah.

Haman: We'll see about that!

Scene III: This scene opens with Haman and the king in deep conversation.

(The king and Haman are on stage off to the side; they pantomime—gesture and talk quietly to each other.)

Chief Servant: (Walks back and forth on stage while giving speech.) Haman told the king lies about the Jewish people. He asked the king's permission to kill the Jews. The king gave his permission.

(Haman and the king exit together, quietly talking as they go down the aisle of the auditorium.)

Haman: (Haman enters, walking down the aisle and talks to himself.) Oh, I'm so happy. I can't wait till all of those Jews are killed, especially Mordecai. I can't stand him. (Haman stamps his feet. He goes onto the stage as he speaks.) What day will I kill those Jews? I have the dice; I'll find out. (Haman throws small pebbles unto the stage while the Chief Servant narrates.)

Chief Servant: Haman throws stones that look like dice onto numbers. They land on numbers 12 and 13. Haman believes that this means the 13th day of the 12th month. The stones that Haman

throws are called lots. The Jewish word for lots means Purim.

Scene IV This scene opens with Mordecai and Queen Esther in deep conversation.

(Mordecai and Queen Esther enter the stage pantomiming—gesturing and talking.)

Chief Servant: (Walks back and forth on the stage.) Mordecai went to Queen Esther. He knew she was the only one who could help the Jewish people. Queen Esther agreed even though she was frightened. Queen Esther told Mordecai to tell the Jewish people to pray and fast for three days. Then she would talk to the king.

Scene V: This scene opens with a banquet planned by Queen Esther for the king. Haman was, also, invited to the banquet.

King: What is that you want beautiful Queen Esther?

Queen Esther: Oh, most honorable king, I have something very important that I must discuss with you. For you see, I am Jewish. Haman has told you lies about the Jewish people. He plans to kill all of the Jews. That means that I must die also.

King: I am so sorry, my beautiful Queen. (Turns to Haman.) For this you will die. (Turns to soldiers standing on the side.) Take him and hang him.

(Soldiers exit with Haman in handcuffs.)

King: From now on, Mordecai will be my chief advisor. Come, come Queen Esther, it has been a long, long night.

(The play ends with the king and queen walking down the isle and exiting.)

Teacher's Bibliography

Arrick, Fran. *Chernowitz* . New York: Penguin Group, 1983. A very powerful book dealing with racial prejudice and how a young boy's most trusting friends turned into enemies.

Cardozo, Arlene Rossen. *Jewish Family Celebrations* . New York: St. Martin's Press, 1982. The book explains traditional family celebrations involving historical Jewish festivals.

Chaikin, Miriam. *Light Another Candle: The Story and Meaning of Hanukkah* . New York: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1981. Explains the significance of Hanukkah along with celebrations in different countries.

Chaikin, Miriam. *The Story and Meaning of Passover: Ask Another Question* . New York: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1985. Chaikin relates the story about the exodus in Jewish history when Moses led the Jews from slavery to freedom.

Cuyler, Margery. *Jewish Holidays* . New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston., 1978. A reference book based on children's involvement and importance in the holiday services.

Drucker, Malka. *Jewish Holidays* ., Boston: Little Brown and Co., 1994. A book containing a wealth of information surrounding Jewish holidays around the world. Tells how to build a Sukkah.

Froner, Judy and Madeline Wikler. *All About Hanukkah* . Rockville: Kar-Ben Copies, Inc., 1988. A great reference book with illustrations includes, games, foods, and songs.

Lazar, Wendy. *The Jewish Holiday Book* . New York: Doubleday and Co., Inc., 1977. Contains over one hundred craft and decoration ideas related to Jewish holidays.

Turner, Reuben. *Jewish Festivals* . Vero Beach: Rourke Enterprises, Inc., 1987. A great reference book relating historical information to children with colorful pictures.

Singer, Isaac Bashevis Singer. *Zlateh The Goat And Other Stories* . New York: Harper and Row, 1966. A collection of children's stories having their origin in Middle-European Jewish folklore and legend. Could be told to the young child.

Singer, Isaac Bashevis. *Stories For Children* . New York: Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 1984. A collection of stories based on cultural tradition from Singer's homeland—Poland.

Children's Bibliography

Adler, David. *A Picture Book of Hanukkah* . New York: A Holiday House Book, 1982. The historical story written and illustrated for children.

Adler, David. *A Picture Book of Passover* . New York: A Holiday House Book, 1982. The historical story of Passover illustrated and given for the young child.

Bial, Morrison David. *The Hanukkah Story* . New York: Behrman House, Inc., 1952. Prepared especially for children, giving the historical significance of Hanukkah including special holiday foods and games.

Cashman, Greer Fay. *Jewish Days and Holidays* . New York: SBS Publishing, 1979.

A children's reference book with colorful illustrations.

Chaikin, Miriam. *Light Another Candle: The Story and Meaning of Hanukkah* . New York: Clarion Books., 1981. Questions and answers surrounding Hanukkah such as: How have customs hanged over centuries? What symbols represent Hanukkah?

Cohen, Barbara. *Molly's Pilgrim* . Bantam Doubleday Dell Publishing Group, Inc., 1995. A story of acceptance in a classroom setting.

Cohn, Janice. *The Christmas Menorahs: How A Town Fought Hate* . Morton Grove: Albert Whitman and Company, 1995. A beautiful story based on true facts how a Montana town stood together against bigotry and acts of hartred. Beautiful illustrations accompany the story.

Corwin, Judith Hoffman. *Jewish Holiday Fun* . New York: Simon and Schuster, Inc., 1987. A lovely book of Jewish holiday crafts.

Drucker, Malka. *Grandma's Latkes* . Orlando: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Publishers, 1992. A young girl helps Grandma make latkes as she learns about the story and bravery of the Maccabees.

Ehrlich, Amy. *The Story of Hanukkah* . New York: Dial Books, 1989. A Very colorful book surrounding the story of Hanukkah.

Gellman, Ellie. *Tamar's Sukkah* . Rockville: Kar-Ben Copies., Inc. 1988. A story about a modern-day girl participating in Sukkah.

Goldin, Barbara Diamond. *Cakes and Miracles: A Purim Tale* . New York: Penguin Books UAA, Inc., 1991. A delightful book involving the Purim holiday, including the recipe for hamantashen, the traditional Purim pastry.

Goldin, Diamond. *Just enough is Plenty* . New York: Viking Penguin, Inc., 1988. A Polish tale surrounding Hanukkah.

Groner, Judye and Wikler, Madeline. *All About Hanukkah* . Rockville: Kar-Ben Copies., Inc., 1988. Explains the historical significance and story behind Hanukkah.

Kimmelman. *Hanukkah Lights, Hanukkah Night* . New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 1992. A modern day family celebrates Hanukkah.

Kuskin, Karla. *A Great Miracle Happened There* . New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 1993. Questions are answered through a modern day family's celebrations.

Levine, Arthur. *All The Lights In The Night* . New York: Tambourine Books, 1991. A lovely story telling about the ancient story of Hanukkah.

Levitin, Sonia. *Journey to America* . New York: Simon and Schuster, 1970. Times become extremely difficult for Jewish families in Germany during the late 1930's. The story involves a family's struggles and hardships as they leave Germany and are later reunited in America.

MacMillan, Dianne M. *Jewish Holidays in the Spring* . Hillside: Enslow Publishers, Inc., 1994. Explains Jewish customs so that the young child can grasp their meaning.

Polacco, Patricia. *The Keeping Quilt* . New York: Simon and Schuster. A delightful book about a quilt that was passed down through three generations. The quilt starts as a reminder of the family's past while living in rural Russia.

Rosen, Michael J. *Elijah's Angel* . New York: Harcourt Brace and Co.,1992. A beautiful story with colorful pictures about a nine-year-old Jewish boy and a Christian black barber and wood carver who become friends and exchange gifts that have meaning to their religious faiths.

Ross, Lillian. *The Little Old Man and His Dreams* . New York: Harper and Row., 1990. A story about trust and acceptance—involves an

elderly man who encounters all kinds of difficulties on his journey to his daughter's wedding.

Schwartz, Lynne Sharon. *The Four Questions* . New York: Dial Books, 1989. Very colorful illustrations along with answering questions for the young child surrounding the Passover celebrations.

Schilder, Rosalind. *How Uncle Murray Saved The Seder* . Rockville: Kar-Ben Copies, Inc., 1988. A delightful story with humor surrounding the Passover celebration.

Shapp, Martha and Charles. *Let's Find Out About Jewish Holidays* . Franklin Watts, Inc., 1977. Explains the meanings of "holy days"—celebrations surrounding the holidays and when they occur.

Sherman, Eileen. *The Odd Potato* . Rockville: Kar-Ben Copies, 1984. A family celebrates Hanukkah.

Silverman, Maida. *The Story of Passover* . New York: Simon and Schuster, Inc., 1988. A delightful book surrounding the historical significance of the Passover. A great reference book surrounding the historical significance of the Passover.

Also, explains many vocabulary words pertinent to the Passover.

Simian, Norm. *Passover* . New York: Crewel Holiday Book, 1965. Vivid descriptions of the historical story surrounding Passover and its traditions. Swartz, Leslie. *A First Passover* . New York: Simon and Schuster, 1992. A delightful story about a Russian family coming to America and celebrating the Passover in freedom.

Teacher Resources

Fun With Character Voices —Video by Liz Von Seggen

For more information about puppetry and puppet supplies contact:

One Way Street, Inc.

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*One does not have to be a ventriloquist to implement this unit in the classroom. If you want to use a puppet for introducing the lessons, an inexpensive puppet using your own voice variation would be effective.

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