



# Home for Dinner



Family Learning Labs

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Hazon works to create healthier and more sustainable communities in the Jewish world and beyond.

*Jewish inspiration. Sustainable communities.*

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Dear Jewish Educator,

Welcome to **Home for Dinner: Family Learning Labs** program guide!

We are very excited that your congregation is partnering with Hazon during the 2013-2014 school year to pilot **Home for Dinner**.

### **Program Overview**

American family life, including American Jewish family life, has spun more and more out of control, with overscheduled kids and under-connected families.

Family dinnertime is the ideal time for adults and children to come together after being apart throughout the day. Sadly, it seems to be becoming an endangered species. Much will be lost if we surrender this unique time for families to break bread, interact and reconnect.

**Home for Dinner** strives to give families the opportunity and the tools to strengthen their family by strengthening family dinner time. They will learn about healthy eating and engage in the shared experience of cooking and food preparation in the context of Jewish family life. The ultimate goal is to strengthen the family unit and in turn, the Jewish home and Jewish life.

**Home for Dinner** is designed to support families as they make the commitment to eat at least one more meal together than they currently do each week. By engaging families in their homes, students in their classrooms, and the families as a community together at the synagogue, **Home for Dinner** provides a multi-faceted approach to re-connect children, parents, and their synagogue community.

The following components of **Home for Dinner** are designed to help families to be successful on this journey:

*Min Ha'Aretz*: This is the classroom component. During their classes, students will be learning more about Jews, food, and contemporary issues from Hazon's interdisciplinary curriculum about food and Jewish tradition, *Min Ha'Aretz*. The time in class will enrich the students' understanding of the role food plays in our Jewish lives.

*Family Learning Labs*: over the next few months, your school will hold a series of events for families, designed to bring parents, children, and the synagogue school community together to learn more about Judaism, food, and the values that can be passed along as families share meals.

**Home for Dinner: Eating Together** is a resource guide to help get families to the dinner table and to make it an enjoyable time together. Whether they are eating burgers or brussels sprouts, we want them to discover that dinner time is quality time with the ones they love.

### **About Hazon**

Hazon means vision. Hazon is America's largest Jewish Environmental group. We create healthier and more sustainable communities in the Jewish world and beyond. We do this in three primary ways: Transformative Experiences - encouraging Jewish people to make a difference in the world, and renewing and reframing their Jewish lives while doing so; Thought-Leadership - advancing Jewish and environmental conversations, practice and possibilities; and Capacity-Building - support of the Jewish Environmental Movement in North America and Israel. To learn more visit [www.hazon.org](http://www.hazon.org)

## Guide to Home for Dinner Family Learning Labs

### Overview

The **Home for Dinner: Family Program** is composed of six programs, or family learning labs, that invite families to engage with the big idea that Jewish tradition, food, and family life are woven together.

A number of other big Jewish ideas are explored:

- *Brachot*: blessings and gratitude for what we have; appreciation;
- *L'Dor va Dor*: generation to generation: passing down of recipes and stories; weaving the generations;
- *Shmirat haGuf*: caring for your body, health, nutrition;
- *Shmirat haAdama*: taking care of the earth, sustainability ;
- *G'milut hasadim*: acts of loving kindness with a specific focus on feeding the hungry.

Each family lab is designed to be about 90+ minutes long (or longer if you wish to add a meal).

### Family Program Launch – Learning Lab #1

**Home for Dinner** Family Program Launch invites families to engage with the Big Jewish Idea that Jewish tradition, food, and family life are woven together. The launch establishes the idea that family meals can be the vehicle for transferring values and ethics, while introducing a number of other big Jewish ideas around strengthening family ties, connecting the generations, and food and tradition.

### Can-Do: A Food Justice Program for the Whole Family – Learning Lab #2

This program is built on several Big Jewish Ideas related to food justice. One is that we can be the hands of God, an extension of the idea *adam nivra b'tzelem Elohim*, human beings are created in the image of God. The other is presented in the first paragraph of *Birkat HaMazon*, that God has provided the world with enough food for all but it's our job to be sure it is distributed evenly.

### Brachot: The Power of Blessings – Learning Lab #3

The act of saying a *bracha* has transformative powers --- when we say a *bracha* we are transforming something ordinary into a gift from God which makes eating (or seeing a shooting star) an experience of God's "grace." Our tradition provides us with a whole system of *brachot*, blessings, for food and far beyond whose purpose is to teach us to see many of the elements of our daily life as gifts and to express appreciation for them.

### Brachot: Hooray for the World – Learning Lab #4

This program continues the exploration started in *Brachot: The Power of Blessings* to further explore that saying a *bracha* is an act of acknowledging a gift. As families consider the gifts they are grateful for, they have the opportunity to connect further with the big idea of this program.

### Family Cooking and Learning Program – Learning Lab #5

The program will allow parents and their children to slow down and make a meal together with their community during the first half of the session. The second half of the program provides a space for students and parents to learn together and from one another. A text study and activities based on To Till & To Tend (Genesis 2:15) provide the context for parent-student conversations about food, the environment, and Judaism.

## Food & Community – Learning Lab # 6

The program has two primary goals. The first is to introduce the Big Jewish Idea of shared meals as means of building community and a way to remember the importance and invaluable role that community plays in all of our lives. The community meal – whether a potluck at the conclusion of this program, a synagogue Shabbat dinner, a large Passover seder, etc – embodies the ideals of sharing and cooperation as a way to bring a community together. The final program also serves as a wrap-up and tying together of the program and an opportunity for evaluation of the families' experiences as part of **Home for Dinner**.

### **LEARNING LAB OUTLINE**

#### **Advance Preparation:**

Think of this as your shopping list to be purchased or prepared prior to the start of the program. It includes suggestions for room set up.

#### Pre-Program Activities:

**The Hors d'oeuvres: approximately 20 minutes - start 10 minutes before the official start time and run for the first 10 minutes of actual program time**

These activities should be set out prior to the official “start time” so that as the “guests” arrive it will allow them to transition from the outside world to the program. Make sure everything is completely set up at least ten minutes before the scheduled start of the program. The hors d'oeuvres are designed to provide a transition into the broad themes of the program and provide meaningful activity for people who arrive early or on time so they feel their time is respected and well-used. It also provides some unstructured socializing time. On the other hand, people who trickle in later will not have missed anything crucial. Depending on how many people you expect to attend the program, you can set up 2, 3, or 4 stations.

#### Warm-Up Activities:

**The Appetizers: approximately 20-30 minutes**

These first activities function like the first course of the meal; substantial, yet lighter than the meal itself. Start this portion of the program promptly 10 minutes after the announced “official” start time. This is the time to gather the whole community together.

**The Main Course: approximately 45 minutes**

The main learning expresses the big Jewish idea. It is the keystone of the program where most of the learning and much of the inter-personal interaction takes place.

#### Wrap-Up:

**Dessert: approximately 10 minutes**

Dessert brings the meal to an enjoyable and meaningful close. This portion of the program wraps up any loose-ends, reinforces the main ideas and reminds everyone of the “take-homes.” As we use it here, it also pulls together threads of the shared experience and sends “guests” on their way with a sweet and memorable taste in their mouths.

### **Complementary to the Learning Labs:**

#### ***Min Ha'Aretz* in the Classroom**

In order to strengthen and reinforce the big ideas in this program, students will be studying from *Min Ha'Aretz*, Hazon's interdisciplinary curriculum about Food and Jewish Tradition, in the classroom. At the end of each family learning lab lesson plan, there is a short description of the *Min Ha'Aretz* lesson(s) that should be taught in conjunction with the family program.

**If you only have 45 minutes...**

While each Learning Lab is designed to run for at least 90 minutes (2 hours is better!), we know that sometimes you don't have that much time to run a program. At the end of each Lab you will find a recommended 45 minute long version of the Lab. It is important to note that some concepts won't be able to be included and some of the depth of exploration will be lost. We hope that you strive to find 90 minutes for each program and if you are unable to do so, we hope that you find these shorter versions to still be rich and varied family experiences for your community. If you are only have 45 minutes of program activity time, we also strongly encourage you to add on a potluck meal in order to allow for the community to continue to connect and keep the conversation and learning going past the end of the formal programming.

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## Guide to Planning a Family Meals Potluck Dinner

Enjoying a community potluck meal is a great way to allow parents and children (and the educators) to experience the power of sharing a meal during a Learning Lab. Whether the potluck is part of the culminating Lab or is incorporated into each Lab, we encourage you to make time to eat together. Below are a few strategies about how to make your potluck meal a success with less stress. To learn more about hosting a communal meal, see Hazon's **Hosting a Sustainable Shabbat Dinner** guide at [www.hazon.org/education](http://www.hazon.org/education).

### Set a *kavanah* (intention)

Ask yourself what you hope the families will get out of this potluck. Time to sit down together with their community? A delicious family meal? A dinner out? Sharing family recipes? Introducing new foods? Name what is important about holding a potluck so you can make sure to include it in all your planning.

### Eating together – negotiating vegetarianism, kashrut, allergies, and more

Communal meals pose some challenges for folks with strict dietary concerns, such as kashrut, allergies or other special food needs. Here are some suggestions to help all those participating in the meal navigate the options with grace:

Inform families ahead of time about any personal dietary concerns that they need to manage on their own. Does the kashrut policy at your synagogue meet their standards? Will there be nuts, gluten, or other allergens in any of the dishes? Let them know which food needs you expect the other families to be able to accommodate, and where individuals may wish to simply bring their own food to supplement what will be contributed to the potluck.

Ask families to create labels for the dish they bring with a list of its ingredients, allowing people to know if the dish is vegetarian, if it contains wheat, or whether or not it contains only *bekhsbered* (kosher certified) ingredients. Encourage the families to use these labels to highlight the delicious local and/ or organic ingredients they used as well!

Make it even easier on your guests: set aside one table for kosher food, one for vegetarian food, one table for gluten-free or nut-free foods, and – of course – one table for everything else.

### Planning the Menu

With a potluck you never know exactly what foods you are going to get, but it is good to provide some guidelines. Divide the families by last name into the following categories: Salads - Main dish - Sides - Dessert - Drinks. Decide where to split the alphabet in order to ensure more people bring salads, mains, and sides and fewer people bring desserts and drinks. Ask each family to bring enough food for 6 - 8 people.

### Setup and Cleanup

*Dishes, napkins, and utensils:* to minimize waste and increase the *heimish* (homey) feel, ditch the disposables, if you can. Provide real dishes or ask people to bring them from their own homes. If you need to use disposables, use post-consumer waste paper goods or plant-based ones and try to avoid plastic and Styrofoam.

*Managing waste:* ask people to put only what they will eat on their plates; they can always come back for seconds. Encourage the families to bring home any leftovers from the dishes they prepare rather than



tossing them. In addition to providing a trash receptacle, set up bins for recycling and compost. Prepare and hang up signage to make it clear how to dispose of waste.

### **Enjoying the Meal**

Before you start the meal, start with a “Food Tour,” asking each family to “introduce” their dish. They can share who made it, highlight any interesting ingredients in the dish and where the ingredients are from, or tell a story they might have about the dish (this is our family’s favorite weeknight dinner, these tomatoes are from our CSA box or backyard, I make this dessert for Shabbat, etc).

Begin the potluck by saying blessings for the different types of foods that are being served. Hand out the list of food *brachot* so that families have a cheat-sheet for saying the appropriate *bracha*. Say the *HaMotzi* over bread as a group.

During the dinner, ask families to share something they are grateful for in addition to food. You can do this in smaller groups or have each person share with the whole group.

Close the dinner with the *Birkat HaMazon*. If the students have completed the classroom exercise about writing their own *Harachman*, encourage them to share their writing.

## Hors D'oeuvres – Pre-program Activities (approximately 20 minutes)

This is a compendium of pre-program activities. Select 2 or 3 to start each Family Lab. Most schools have chosen to include at least one graffiti wall each time.

These activities should be set out prior to the official “start time” so that as the “guests” arrive it will allow them to transition from the outside world to the program. Make sure everything is completely set up at least ten minutes before the scheduled start of the program. The hors d’oeuvres are designed to provide a transition into the broad themes of the program and provide meaningful activity for people who arrive early or on time so they feel their time is respected and well-used. It also provides some unstructured socializing time. On the other hand, people who trickle in later will not have missed anything crucial.

### Healthy snack foods (depending upon time of day)

*Be creative* – invite parents to bring in homemade snacks, slice up fresh fruit or seasonal veggies, pop some popcorn, make a different dip each time for veggie crudité, unsalted almonds and cashews are always a nice treat (watch out for allergies).

### Name tags

Name tags are a great way for the community to come together as everyone can be on first name basis and there are no embarrassing moments of forgetting someone’s name. Make these name tags from recycled materials. On a table, put a pile of cardboard food packaging, scissors, yarn and markers, and a hole-puncher. Allow people to cut out squares from the food packaging to make their name tags. Collect the name tags at the end to re-use during future learning labs.

- Materials
  - Scissors
  - Yarn
  - Hole-puncher
  - Cardboard food packaging (cereal boxes, pasta boxes, etc.)
  - Markers
  - Stickers, glitter, etc. for decoration

### Activities

Select 2 to 5 stations depending on how many people you expect to attend the program. At each program, make sure to include healthy snacks and name tags.

Graffiti Walls: Put up large pieces of butcher paper with thought provoking topics (see below). Depending on the number of people you are expecting, put up 1, 2, or 3 different topics. Save other topics for future learning labs. Have a basket of markers on the floor in front for parents and students to use to write on the “walls”

- Topic ideas
  - songs that mention food
  - my favorite food
  - best lunch box foods
  - best meal I ever ate
  - best cook I know
  - things I love to cook
  - favorite ice cream flavor
  - suitable food to provide for the hungry (and why)
  - what is a food you love or are thankful for
  - how do you help your family on family meal nights
  - what are you thankful for?

- the best things in life are free - what are they
- Calendar related: share your favorite Passover food; your favorite kind of apple; your favorite Jewish holiday food

- Materials
  - Large paper for walls – self-stick easel paper or butcher paper
  - Markers

Graffiti Walls for Food and Community (or your final **Home for Dinner** learning lab of the year)

These graffiti walls are designed specifically for the final learning lab, but can be used with each Lab. You can use all 7 or select the ones you want to use based on the number of people you are expecting to attend. Options 2 and 7 use generic check off lists, so if you choose one of these options, make sure to also choose another wall to put up from the options below that will be specific just for your program.

These walls are designed to engage the participants and be a means for evaluating the program. In order to get feedback from your participants, you are strongly encouraged to include these walls in your final program.

Allow time for everyone to take a marker and circulate, writing on each wall, answering each question.

*Options:*

1. Two adjectives that describe your experience/learning this year in **Home for Dinner**.
2. Make a list of the learning labs that you ran over the year, include the descriptions found on page 5- if they are helpful to jog students' and parents' memory – participants can then:
  - Put a check beside each family learning lab you attended.
  - Draw a star next to one you enjoyed most
3. What was the best meal you had together as a family this year?
4. Something you learned about food, eating, family during **Home for Dinner**.
5. For the students only: Put a star next to the *Min Ha'Aretz* lesson you enjoy/ learned the most from.
  - To Grow
  - Sharing Food – Hunger in the City
  - Blessings Before the Meal
  - Blessings After the Meal
  - Earth
  - Growing Environment
6. What is one question you still have about food, eating or family?
7. Which aspect of **Home for Dinner** meant the most to you?
  - Family Learning Labs at synagogue
  - Learning with our family
  - Getting together with other 5th grade families
  - Having dinner together as a family more often
  - Becoming more thoughtful about food
  - Keeping the family dinner journal
  - Using the Hazon parent resource booklet
  - Hearing about our kids' learning
  - Other:

Setting the table: On which side of the plate does a fork go? Where does the water glass go? Families can test their table setting knowledge at this station. On a table, put out several complete sets of dishes and utensils (paper and plastic is fine) with the assignment to create a correctly set place mat. There is a “key” sheet face down on the table for self-checking and correcting when complete. As a family or individual completes their table setting, all the dishes and utensils can be returned to the center of the table for others to take a turn.

- Materials
  - 3 full sets of family table ware – napkins, dinner plates, salad plates, bread and butter plate with butter knife, water glass, fork, knife, plate with butter knife, teaspoon
  - 3 place mats
  - 3 copies of Family Dinner Table Setting handout (pg 14)

ChooseMyPlate.Gov: Use the new United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) food icon for healthy eating, which has the food “pyramid”. Put out the plates and pictures of food or toy plastic food. Ask families to work together to sort food onto the plate according to these healthy guidelines.

- Materials
  - 2 copies of ChooseMyPlate.Gov (pg 15)
  - Pictures of food (or wooden or plastic foods)
  - Plates

Food Label Activity: Set out a few different types of packaged foods (can, bag, box, etc). Post a few questions that help participants learn from the nutrition information labels. Include a question referring to the *hechsber* (kashrut symbol). Display the new nutrition facts labels included in the handout. Ask participants to vote for the one that they think is the best (most helpful) by putting a check mark or sticker by their choice.

- Materials
  - Food labels cut out from packaging or several packages of food
  - New Food Label Proposals handout (pgs 16-18)

Bracha Bee & Snack: Set up a few healthy snack foods for everyone to enjoy. On the table, post a list of possible food *brachot* to match with the foods. Consider having a staff member nearby to help participants find the right match and say the *bracha*.

- Materials
  - Healthy snack foods
  - Food brachot handout (pg 19)

Brachot Collage Wall: Match pictures with the correct *brachot*. Print or cut and paste the various food *brachot* on the poster. Have pictures of food already prepared or have a stack of magazines, seed company catalogues, etc.

- Materials
  - Pictures of various foods: use a seed catalogue, a cooking magazine, or an old cookbook
  - Food brachot list handout (pg 19)

Cooking Terms: On a table, set up the cooking term cards. Ask families to match the cooking terms cards with their definition cards.

- Materials
  - Cooking terms matching cards (pg 20-21)

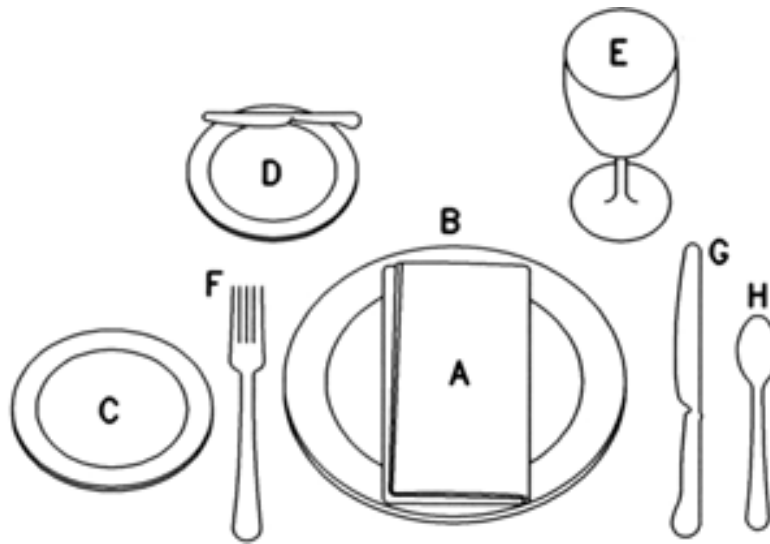
Kitchen Equipment: Create a table display with a mixture of common and unusual kitchen tools. Place a number beside each one. Participants receive a pre-numbered sheet of paper on which to write down what each implement is and/or what it does next to its corresponding number.

- Materials
  - Miscellaneous kitchen implements – for example: flour sifter, egg separator, garlic press, lemon zester, falafel press, melon baller, peeler, grater, mushroom brush, measuring spoons, etc.
  - Post-it notes or other small pieces of paper to number each utensil
  - Pre-numbered paper to write answers on
  - Pens, pencils, or markers

What IS this? Put out six different recipes without the titles. After participants read the recipes, they should try to guess what it is and then check the back of the recipe for the answer.

- Materials
  - What IS This Recipe Cards (pg 22-31) – printed double sided, one side with the recipe and one side with the title and description.

## Family Dinner Table Setting



- A. Napkin
- B. Dinner Plate
- C. Salad Plate

D. Bread and Butter Plate with butter knife

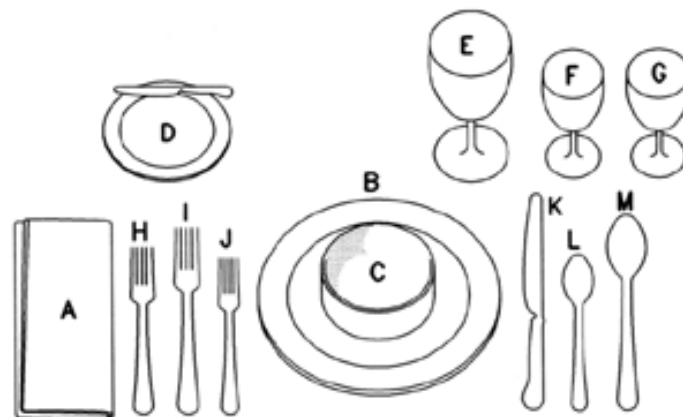
E. Water glass

F. Fork

G. Knife Plate with butter knife

H. Teaspoon

## Formal Dinner Table Setting



A. Napkin

B. Service plate

C. Soup bowl on a liner plate

D. Bread and Butter Plate with butter knife.

E. Water glass

F. Wine glass

Source: [www.homenlinens.com](http://www.homenlinens.com)

G. Wine glass

H. Salad Fork

I. Dinner Fork

J. Dessert Fork

K. Knife

L. Teaspoon

M. Soup Spoon



# Nutrition



**Ingredients:** *Organic Grain Blend (Hard Red Wheat, Oats, Rye, Triticale, Barley), Organic Salted Whole Almonds*, Brown Rice Syrup, Soy Protein Isolate, Soy Grits, Evaporated Cain Juice Crystals, Chicory Root Fiber, *Organic Flax Seeds*, Rice Starch, **Methylparaben, Sodium Nitrite**, Cocoa (Processed with Alkali), **Artificial Flavors**, Sea Salt, **Sodium Acid Pyrophosphate**, Eggs, Butter, **High Fructose Corn Syrup**, Honey.

**Contains:** Wheat, Milk, Soy, Eggs and Almonds

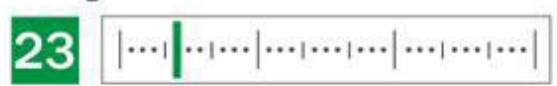
## One Serving



9%	Vitamin A	8g	Protein
5%	Vitamin D	4g	Fiber
17%	Calcium		
11%	Iron	250mg	Omega-3

\*Based on a 2,000 calorie diet.

## Glycemic Index



Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size 2 tortillas (51g)	
Servings Per Container 6	
Amount Per Serving	
<b>Calories 110</b>	<b>Calories from Fat 10</b>
% Daily Value*	
<b>Total Fat 1g</b>	<b>2%</b>
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	
<b>Cholesterol 0mg</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Sodium 30mg</b>	<b>1%</b>
<b>Total Carbohydrate 22g</b>	<b>7%</b>
Dietary Fiber 2g	9%
Sugars 0g	
<b>Protein 2g</b>	
Vitamin A 0%	Vitamin C 0%
Calcium 2%	Iron 4%
*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs:	
	Calories: 2,000 2,500
Total Fat	Less than 65g 80g
Saturated Fat	Less than 20g 25g
Cholesterol	Less than 300mg 300mg
Sodium	Less than 2,400mg 2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate	300g 375g
Dietary Fiber	25g 30g
Calories per gram:	
Fat 9 • Carbohydrate 4 • Protein 4	



Bag of Normal Salted Potato Chips

**Nutrition Information**  
 This package contains 1292 Calories  
 snack meal

**85g Fat** ●  
 25g Saturated Fat 13%  
 No Trans Fat

**113g Carbs** ●  
 NO Sugar Added 0%

**1192mg Sodium** ●  
 1190mg Sodium Added 50%

**2g Fiber** ●  
 12g Fiber Removed 6%

**7g Protein** ●  
 5% Calcium 70% Vitamin A  
 20% Iron NO Vitamin C

Typical PowerBar

**Nutrition Information**  
 This bar contains 247 Calories  
 snack meal

**2g Fat** ●  
 1g Saturated Fat 2%  
 No Trans Fat

**47g Carbs** ●  
 16g Sugar Added 6%

**99mg Sodium** ●  
 80mg Sodium Added 4%

**6g Fiber** ●  
 2g Fiber Added 4%

**10g Protein** ●  
 34% Calcium NO Vitamin A  
 44% Iron 105% Vitamin C

**Nutrition Facts**  
 Servings per container  
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

Grade per serving

**Calories** 942 ● **C**

**Fat** 8% ● **B**

**Cholesterol** 15% ● **C**

**Sodium** 3% ● **A**

**Fiber** 5% ● **D**

**Sugars** 35% ● **F**

---

**Vitamin A** 12% ● **A**

**Iron** 15% ● **C**

---

**Eco Footprint** ● **B**  
 Distance traveled 160mi  
 Sustainability Index 85%

**Nutrition Facts**  
 Servings per container  
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

Grade per serving

**Calories** 942 ● **C**

**Fat** 8% ● **B**

**Cholesterol** 15% ● **C**

**Sodium** 3% ● **A**

**Fiber** 5% ● **D**

**Sugars** 35% ● **F**

---

**Vitamin A** 12% ● **A**

**Iron** 15% ● **C**

---

**Eco Footprint** ● **B**  
 Distance traveled 160mi  
 Sustainability Index 85%

In order to ease understanding and increase consumer interest, this concept leverages three known languages. The current nutrition label structure. The standard scholastic grading ratings of A-F  
 Stoplight: Green = go, yellow = caution, red = stop

Thanks, Dylan Brown

Source: <http://www.good.is/post/the-best-nutrition-label-ideas>

## Food Blessings

### Before eating bread:



בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם הַמוֹצִיא לֶחֶם מִן הָאָרֶץ.

*Baruch atah adonai elohaynu melech ha'olam hamotzi lechem min ha'arets.*  
Blessed are You, eternal G-d, who brings forth bread from the earth.

### Before eating non bread foods made from wheat, oats, rye, barley, and spelt:



בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם בּוֹרֵא מִיְנֵי מִזֻּנוֹת.

*Baruch atah adonai elohaynu melech ha'olam borei minei m'zonot.*  
Blessed are You, eternal G-d, who creates many kinds of nourishment.

### Before drinking grape juice or wine (but not eating grapes or raisins):



בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הַגֶּפֶן.

*Baruch atah adonai elohaynu melech ha'olam borei p'ri hagafen.*  
Blessed are You, eternal G-d, who creates fruit of the vine.

### Before eating fruit from a tree and certain vines (grapes, raisins, apples, oranges, walnuts, almonds, but not bananas or peanuts—and not juice):



בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הָעֵץ.

*Baruch atah adonai elohaynu melech ha'olam borei p'ri haetz.*  
Blessed are You, eternal G-d, who creates fruit of the tree.

### Before eating produce that grew from the earth (most vegetables, rice, corn, bananas, pineapple and berries—but not juice):



בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הָאֲדָמָה.

*Baruch atah adonai elohaynu melech ha'olam borei p'ri ha'adamah.*  
Blessed are You, eternal G-d, who creates fruit of the earth.

### Before eating anything else (milk, meat, eggs, candy, potato chips):


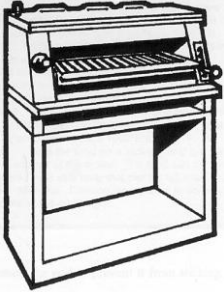
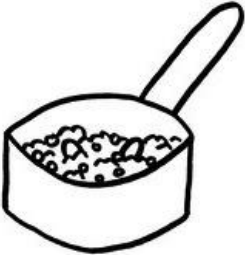









בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם שֶׁהַכֹּל נִהְיֶה בְּדַבָּרוֹ.

*Baruch atah adonai elohaynu melech ha'olam she'hakol n'hiyeh b'dvaro.*  
Blessed are You, eternal G-d, through whose word all things come into being.

Bake	Broil
Simmer	Steam
Sautee	Beat
Chop	Knead
Blanch	Peel

Home for Dinner – Hors D'oeuvres  
Cooking Terms Matching Cards

### **Potato latkes**

Potato latkes (also known as potato pancakes) are traditionally eaten by Jews during the winter holiday of Hanukah. Hanukah celebrates the miracle of the oil that lasted for eight days, and so we eat many dishes that are fried in or full of oil.

Latkes were introduced to our Jewish food traditions by Russian and Eastern European Jews. They used the oil symbolic of the holiday and foods that were cheap and already part of their diets: potatoes and onions.

What other vegetables could you put in latkes?

What is your favorite topping for latkes?

**Ingredients** *Makes 12*

4 medium russet potatoes (2 pounds), scrubbed  
1 small onion, peeled (optional)  
2 eggs  
1/4 cup flour  
2 teaspoons kosher salt, plus more for serving  
1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper  
Oil, for frying  
Sour cream and apple sauce for serving

**Instructions**

1. Grate potatoes and onion (if desired), using the medium/fine grating side of a box grater. Squeeze out excess liquid from the potato mixture with your hands or a kitchen towel. In a medium bowl, combine the potato mixture, eggs, flour, salt and pepper; stir well.
2. Meanwhile, fill a frying pan with enough oil to come a half an inch up the sides. Heat on medium high for about five minutes, or until oil is ready for frying (about 350 degrees). Drop potato batter into hot oil, using two to three tablespoonfuls per serving, and gently press to flatten. Continue until skillet is full, leaving enough room between each piece so that they do not touch. Cook, turning once with a slotted spoon or spatula, until golden brown, about four minutes per side.
3. Remove from skillet, and let drain on a paper-towel lined plate; sprinkle with salt. Repeat until all batter is used. Serve warm.

Read more: <http://forward.com/articles/9642/for-the-love-of-the-latke/#ixzz2XLL7tggg>

*Posted on the Jew and the Carrot, "For the Love of the Latke," by Allison Fishman, Dec 15 2006*  
(<http://www.forward.com/articles/9642/>)

### **Lactofermented Pickles**

An Old World preservation classic! Lactofermentation (one type of fermentation) is used to preserve vegetables and other foods. This natural fermentation process happens thanks to the good bacteria that live on the skins of cucumbers and other fruits and veggies (as well as in the air). These bacteria make lactic acid, which helps preserve your cucumbers and keeps out the bad bacteria.

In contrast to vinegar pickling, which uses vinegar to kill all living organisms, lactofermentation keeps the good bacteria alive (a great benefit for your digestive tract and general health!) and keeps out the bacteria and other organisms that can make us sick.

Cheese and yogurt are other foods that are made using fermentation. Can you name more?

**Ingredients and supplies**

1 quart jar (with lid)  
2 tablespoons sea salt (small grain)  
Hot and cold water  
1 tablespoon spice mix  
3-4 whole cloves garlic  
4 sprigs of dill or 1 dill flower  
Cucumbers (use a smaller variety of cucumber, the fresher the better!)

**Instructions**

1. Measure salt and pour into bottom of jar. Add hot water, as little as possible, and stir until salt dissolves.
2. Fill 55% of the jar with cold water. Add spices, garlic and dill to the salt water.
3. Add your cucumbers (pack them in strategically, medium sized on the bottom, smaller ones on top). Add “toppers” so that the cucumbers are completely submerged. Cover jar with lid or cloth – but do not seal.
4. Allow cucumbers to ferment in a warm (above 50 degrees) environment. Depending on how sour you want it, you can continue to ferment and keep checking daily – likely about a week. Once you are happy with the flavor, stick the jar with the lid tightened now, in the fridge. Refrigeration will stop the fermentation process, if you take them out of the fridge they’ll begin to ferment again.
5. Keep in mind that you shouldn’t tighten the lid while fermenting as the pressure will build up and your container can explode!

Recipe from Blair Nosan and Elisheva Margulies.

*Posted on The Jew and the Carrot, “Yid.Dish: Eli and Blair’s Dill Pickles,” by Mia-Rut, Dec 25 2008*  
[\(http://www.forward.com/articles/130597/\)](http://www.forward.com/articles/130597/)



### **Hamentaschen**

Hamentaschen are three-cornered cookies eaten during the Jewish holiday of Purim. These cookies, called *oznei Haman* (ears of Haman) in Hebrew, symbolize the defeat of Haman, the villain in the Purim story.

This recipe calls for a poppy seed filling, which many claim is the traditional hamentaschen filling. You can also use jams, chocolate chips, and other sweet or savory options.

What is your favorite hamentaschen filling?

*Posted on The Jew and the Carrot, "Yid.Dish: Hamentaschen," by Leah Koenig, June 30 2005*  
(<http://www.forward.com/articles/130441>)

**Ingredients** *Makes 40.*

*Dough:*

11 tablespoons (1 stick plus 3 tablespoons) butter or margarine, softened  
1/2 cup sugar  
1 large egg  
3 tablespoons orange juice, sweet red wine, or water (or 2 tablespoons water and 1  
tablespoon lemon juice)  
1 teaspoon vanilla extract  
1/4 teaspoon salt  
About 2 3/4 cups all-purpose flour

*Poppy seed filling:*

1 1/2 cups (about 7 ounces) poppy seeds, ground in a food grinder or food processor  
3/4 cup water or milk  
2/3 cup sugar or honey (or 1/3 cup each)  
1 tablespoon lemon or orange juice or 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract  
1 tablespoon butter or margarine  
Pinch of salt  
1 1/2 teaspoons grated lemon or orange zest (optional)  
1/3 cup raisins  
1/4 cup finely chopped almonds, walnuts, or pecans (optional)

**Instructions**

1. To make the dough: Beat the butter or margarine until smooth, about 1 minute. Gradually add the sugar and beat until light and fluffy, about 5 minutes. Beat in the egg. Blend in the juice, wine or water, vanilla, and salt. Stir in enough of the flour to make a soft dough. Wrap the dough in plastic wrap and chill until firm, at least 1 hour and up to 3 days. (If the dough becomes too hard, let it stand at room temperature until malleable but not soft.)
2. To make the filling: Combine the poppy seeds, water or milk, and honey and simmer over a medium-low heat, stirring frequently, until the mixture thickens, about 10 minutes. Remove from the heat and add the remaining ingredients. Let cool. (Store in the refrigerator for up to 3 days.)
3. Preheat the oven to 375 degrees.
4. For easy handling, divide the dough into 4 pieces. On a lightly floured surface, roll out each piece 1/8 inch thick. Using a 2 1/2 to 3-inch cookie cutter or glass, cut out rounds. Reroll and cut the scraps.
5. Place 1 teaspoon of the filling in the center of each round. Pinch the bottom side of the dough round together over the filling. Fold down the top flap and pinch the other two sides together to form a triangle, leaving some filling exposed in the center.
6. Place the prepared dough 1-inch apart on ungreased baking sheets. Bake until golden brown, about 13 minutes. Transfer to a wire rack and let cool completely.

### **Matzah Balls**

Matzah balls, also called *kneydlekh* in Yiddish, are a favorite traditional Jewish Ashkenazi dish. These dumplings are made from matzah meal and can be eaten on Passover or anytime during the year.

Many people have a particular favorite matzah ball recipe. Some people use chicken fat (known as *schmaltz* in Yiddish), and other people use vegetable oil. Some people use chicken soup stock for liquid and flavoring, but for a vegetarian option you can use water or vegetable broth.

Do you like fluffy or dense matzah balls?

In your opinion, who makes the best matzah balls?

*Posted on The Jew and the Carrot, "Matzo Ball Trade Secrets," by Devra Ferst, March 26 2011*  
(<http://www.forward.com/articles/126923>)

### **Ingredients**

1 tablespoon salt  
4 large eggs  
1/3 cup schmaltz (chicken fat)  
1/4 teaspoon salt  
1/4 teaspoon pepper  
1 tablespoon baking powder  
1 1/3 cup matzo meal

### **Instructions**

1. Fill a large, wide stockpot three-quarters full of water, add tablespoon of salt, and bring to a rapid boil.
2. While water is boiling, crack eggs into a large bowl and beat thoroughly. Beat in schmaltz, 1/4 teaspoon salt, pepper, and baking powder. Slowly fold in matzo meal, mixing vigorously until completely blended. Refrigerate mixture for 30 minutes.
3. Wet your hands and, folding the mixture in your palms, shape balls about 1 1/4 inches in diameter (they will double in size when cooked).
4. Gently place the balls in the boiling water, and reduce heat to a simmer. Cook for 25 minutes. Remove with a slotted spoon and place one or two in each bowl of soup. Serve immediately.

*Makes 12-14.*

Recipe from *The 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue Deli Cookbook*.

### **Challah**

Challah is a special braided bread eaten on Shabbat and other Jewish holidays. The word “challah” comes from the blessing that is said when one separates a piece of dough before braiding the bread. This piece of dough represents the portion that was given to the priests when bread was made in ancient times.

The blessing for taking that piece of challah is:

*Barukh attah adonai eloheinu melekh ha-olam asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu le-ha'frish  
challah min ha-isah*

Blessed are you Adonai, our God, ruler of the universe, who has sanctified us with His commandments and commanded us to separate challah from the dough.

What blessing do you say before eating challah?

*Posted on The Jew and the Carrot, “Yid.Dish: Homemade Challah,” by Leah Koenig, June 30, 2005  
(<http://www.forward.com/articles/130533/>)*

### **Ingredients**

*1 ¼ cups warm water (a little warmer than lukewarm)*

*3 tablespoons yeast (or 3 packets)*

*1 capful of cinnamon (for whole wheat only)*

*2 teaspoons salt*

*1/3 cups oil*

*2/3 cups sugar*

*5 large eggs*

*3 cups of whole wheat flour and then add white until doughy (probably 5-6 cups total, but check the consistency as you go)*

### **Instructions**

1. Mix the water and yeast together and let sit until foamy – about 10 minutes.
2. Add the other ingredients.
3. Knead for couple minutes.
4. Oil the bowl that you're letting it rise in, so the dough won't stick to the sides. Let it rise until it's double the size. (Tip for rising: if it's not rising fast enough, turn on the oven to 200 degrees. Once it's hot enough, turn off the oven and put the dough in. This will make it rise faster, but make sure it's not hot enough to bake it!)
5. Punch the dough down. Braid into loaves and let them rise until they are double the size.
6. Bake on 350 for about 25 minutes.

Recipe by Leah Koenig.

# Home for Dinner: Family Program Launch

## Learning Lab #1

### The Big Jewish Idea

**Home for Dinner** Family Learning Labs create a setting in which families can engage with the big idea that Jewish tradition, food, and family life are woven together. The program introduces other big Jewish ideas such as *brachot*: gratitude for what we have, not taking things for granted; *L'Dor va Dor*: Generation to generation: the passing down of recipes, and family stories; *Shmirat haGuf*: caring for your body, health, nutrition; *Shmirat haAdama*: taking care of the earth, sustainability; *G'milut hasadim*: acts of loving kindness like feeding the hungry. These ideas will be further explored in subsequent **Home for Dinner** Family Learning Labs. The Launch also introduces the idea that family meals can be the vehicle for transferring values and ethics and concludes with families signing a Family Meals Pledge to eat together at least one more meal a week than they currently do.

### Advance Preparation

#### Prepare the Families:

- Set the date in advance and let your families know, with lots of advance notice! Use email and the **Home for Dinner** flyer to get the word out and to remind parents.
- Remind each family to bring a can of food for the food bank or pantry – including a food donation with each family learning lab is a strong physical reminder of *tikkun olam*.
- Contact local food banks or soup kitchens in your area. If you need to make a connection with a food bank or pantry in your area, visit [AmpleHarvest.org](http://AmpleHarvest.org) to find an emergency food provider near you.

#### Materials

*For Hors D'oeuvres:* Chose from activities described on pages 11-14

- Select and set up some graffiti walls and 2-3 of the Hors D'oeuvre activities, including a healthy snack and name tags

*For Appetizer:*

- Song Sheets for people to share (optional)

*For Main Course:*

- Student Thought Cards (pages 37-41): print and cut 1 per student, use a different colored paper for each quote.
- Parent Thought Cards (pages 42-53): print and cut 1 per student, use a different colored paper for each quote, try not to replicate colors used for student thought cards.
- Thought Card Questions (see page 35) – write on large easel paper and hang around the room
- Handout: The Importance of Family Dinner (enough for 2 parents to share 1 copy) (pg 54)
- Family Meal Pledge form – one copy per family (pg 55)
- Journals: use exam “blue books” or the old-fashioned Hebrew “machberet” type notebooks
- Journal decorating materials: construction paper, markers, crayons, paste or tape, pictures of food

*For Dessert: Take-home:*

- **Home for Dinner:** Eating Together (parent resource book) (1 per family)

## I. Hors D'oeuvres

*The hors d'oeuvres are designed to provide a transition into the broad themes of the program and provide meaningful activity for people who arrive early or on time so they feel their time is respected and well-used.*

In addition to some graffiti walls, select 2-3 Hors D'oeuvres stations depending on how many people you expect to attend the learning lab. At each learning lab, make sure to include healthy snacks and name tags. See pages 11-14 for descriptions of “hors d'oeuvres” activities.

## II. Appetizers

*These first activities function like the first course of the meal; substantial, yet lighter than the meal itself.*

Start the learning lab promptly at 10 minutes after the announced start time. Gather the whole community together as you begin this section.

### a) Baruch Haba - Welcoming circle (5 minutes)

As you welcome the families – parents, grandparents, other guardians and the children – provide an overview of **Home for Dinner** and of the day's learning lab.

Here are a few things to point out to everyone about **Home for Dinner**:

- We are starting a program that focuses on Jewish life, Jewish tradition and food – food in general and specifically eating together with your families.
- Students will be learning parallel material in the classroom from *Min Ha'Aretz* (about *brachot* (blessings) before and after we eat, hunger in our community, healthy eating...)
- Today is the first of several special events at which we will bring parents *and* children together..
- Not all the learning will happen at the synagogue. There will be times when you will take what you have thought about during these programs or the students have thought about in the classroom and bring it back to your own kitchen table.
- **Home for Dinner** is part of Hazon. Hazon means vision. Hazon is America's largest Jewish environmental organization. Hazon's vision is to create healthier and more sustainable communities in the Jewish world and beyond. Hazon designs and implements programs and events that give people a chance to explore their relation to the physical world and to their Jewishness.

### b) Singing (2 minutes)

As part of the welcome, bringing everyone's voices together in song can help to bring everyone together as a community. If you don't normally sing as a community, you might want to choose one song to learn and sing at all future family learning labs. If your community is more familiar with singing, select a few songs for the welcome. Make sure to pass out song lyrics for people who are less familiar with the songs. You can also sing a *niggun*, a tune without lyrics that can allow people to learn it on the spot. (see page 80-81 for songs).

### c) Introductions (8 minutes)

This activity helps families begin to know one another and warms them up to the theme of the year – Jews, food, and eating together!

Start with a few whips. A “whip” is created when you quickly go around the room and have everyone answer a short, straightforward question or complete a sentence. For example, “tell the group if you are a vegan, vegetarian, or an omnivore, favorite fruit, favorite veggie, or the healthiest food that you really like.” Depending on the size of the group, have one large circle or divide and have smaller (facilitated) circles.



### III. Main Course

#### a) Hand out Thought Cards for Individual Learning Time (5 minutes)

Select from the included options, paying attention to your population. You don't need to use them all and you can decide to have duplicates. Most kids' cards come with questions. Adult cards refer to a more general list of reflective questions which you can post or print.

Pass out a Student Thought Card to each student, and a Parent Thought Card to each parent. (The whole batch includes quotations, pictures, advertisements, cartoons.) Select from the included options, paying attention to your population. You don't need to use them all and you can decide to have duplicates. Most "Kids' Cards" come with questions. Adults refer to a more general list of more reflective question which you can post or print.

Invite each person to spend a few quiet minutes with their own thought card. Adults can read and consider the following Thought Card questions (post the questions in the room for people to reference). It helps to have a few staff to help kids if they are stuck as this may be a stretch for some of them.

- What does it bring to mind for you?
- Where does this lead you?
- Do you agree or disagree?
- What would you ask the author, designer, or cartoonist?
- How can you make use of it in your life?

#### b) Sharing Thought Cards (10-15 minutes)

Direct them to talk with their own family about their thought card and share their personal reactions with their family members.

Then ask each family to join another family and share their reactions to their thought cards again, with these new people.

#### c) Whole Group Share the Learning (20 minutes)

Reconvene the whole group. Debrief by asking them to share any "ahas" that they had, insights and realizations, and to ask any questions that might have come up for them.<sup>1</sup>

Ask the participants to identify the Big (Jewish) Ideas<sup>2</sup> about food that came up in the various handouts and discussions. List them on an easel paper (or white board, power point) as they are mentioned.

For curricular purposes the following are the key ideas we hope will be mentioned. You may get more, which is fine. List them, too. If any of these are missing, mention them when the group's list seems to have come to an end and add them to the list.

- *Brachot*: gratitude for what we have, not taking things for granted
- *L'Dor va Dor*: generation to generation: passing down of recipes, family stories
- *Shmirat haGuf*: caring for your body, health, nutrition
- *Shmirat haAdama*: taking care of the earth, sustainability

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<sup>1</sup> Some groups might chose to split the group at this point, sending the kids off to a parallel program while continuing the discussion of Big Jewish Ideas with the parents.

<sup>2</sup> Participants may or may not be able to identify the "Jewish" aspect of the ideas, but you can supply the label when they are mentioned. For example, a person might say something like "we should choose foods that help us stay healthy" and you could write down: "shmirat haguf, taking care of our bodies".

- *G'milut hasadim*: acts of loving kindness like feeding the hungry
- *Tzedakah*: sharing material possessions with those in need
- *Kashrut*: the literal meaning of kosher means “fit”
- *Hakhnassat orhim*: welcoming guests to your home
- Family dinner together builds a strong family
- *Derekh eretz*: manners
- *Kavod*: respect

Summarize, referring to the centrality of food in our lives and in our families and relate it to **Home for Dinner**.

d) Student & Adult Parallel Learning Sessions (30 minutes)

Split adults and students into separate groups.

Parents

This is your opportunity to:

a) Reinforce the material and ideas presented so far (see list above). Stress the idea of dinner time as potential for family growth and bonding. Your children are home more now than they will be during the teen years, this is a key time to build family connections;

*For a family that basically has dinner together most nights* – challenge them to “upgrade” that experience by: including kids in the cooking, trying some new foods, choosing special “themes” for dinner (joke night, family story night, invite-a-friend night, vegan night, wheat free night, etc).

Don't be surprised if many of the families report having dinner together often. Fifth graders lives are still substantially home-based. The big changes that challenge family dinner time are just around the corner as school and social activities begin to make a bigger claim on kids' lives. The strengthening of family dinner time now will pay off and become even more important as the kids enter their teen age years.

b) Provide a more in-depth overview of **Home for Dinner**, including future family learning labs; *Min Ha'Aretz* classroom curriculum; and any extra-curricular events you have planned;

c) Finally, mention the dinner pledge – one of the goals of the program being for families to have at least one more family dinner a week than is their current practice and to strengthen their family meals so that they will continue throughout the teen years.

Give everyone the handout, “The Importance of Family Dinners” by Elinor Ochs (pg 54). Allow a few minutes for reading. Ask them to talk it over with someone sitting near them (preferably not a spouse).

Focus the group again and ask them what this quote has to teach us about dinner time and the family.

Ask them to think about how many times a week their family sits down together.

Ask if they think that is sufficient to meet the goals that Ochs talks about. How many *more* times a week *could* they convene their family for dinner? How could they make their meals more meaningful?

Hand out the “Family Meal Pledge” form and have them fill it in.

Allow time for parents to ask any questions. You might want to give out “Eating Together” (the parent handbook), one per family, at this time and read through relevant FAQs, if time permits.

Close by returning to the list of big ideas that was gathered from the whole group. Read it over. If anyone has anything to add this is the time. Reinforce the idea that dinner together is rich with possibilities, an “opportunity space,” in Ochs’ words.

Kids (parallel time):

As part of **Home for Dinner**, the families will be asked to keep Family Meals Journals. The journals will also be discussed during classroom time. Remind the students that the journals can include recipes, photos, drawings, essays, etc.

Students will begin the journal today by decorating the cover and copying or pasting in their thought card from earlier in the learning lab.

For students who finish their work on their journals, return to the hors d’oeuvres activities, they can return to the opening activities:

- 1) Do a “gallery walk” of the graffiti walls. Kids can comment and add to what is already there
- 2) Have a “set the table” competition (3 kids in a “race” to be finished and correct)
- 3) Look over the new USDA food labels

#### **IV. Dessert (closing circle)**

Have the families reconnect after the parallel activities to sign the pledge the parents have prepared and have kids present the family dinner journal they have begun.

Then, gather everyone in a big circle for a closing “whip” such as: everyone says one word that represents “food and family” to them. Whip around the circle. Allow people to pass.

Any reminders or announcements.

Closing song (either a repeat from the opening song or another familiar song)

#### ***Min Ha’Aretz* in the Classroom: Lesson 1**

In Lesson 1: To Grow, students can be introduced to the idea of that Jewish tradition and food are woven together. This lesson allows students to reflect on where their food comes from. Genesis 1:29 provides an entry point into a discussion about the importance and roles of seeds, human beings, and God in producing food. Students then follow step-by-step instructions in order to sprout seeds.

### **If you only have 45 minutes...**

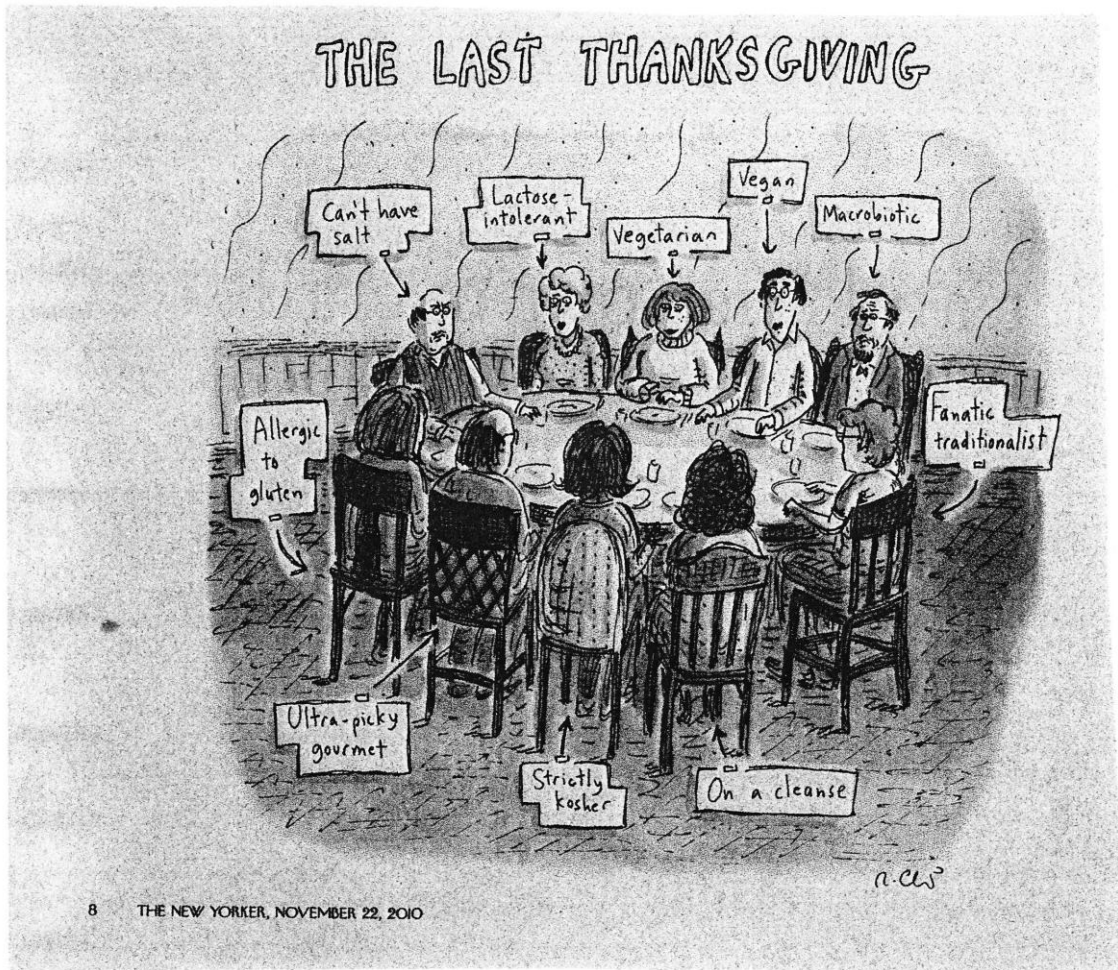
Here is the outline of the sections you should include for a shorter version of the Family Program Launch. We have noted suggested revisions to fit the shorter time frame.

II. Appetizers – do sections a) and c) (10 minutes)

III. Main Course - a) and b) (20 minutes)

III. Main Course c) - *revised* - help bring together the various groups and very briefly capture the big ideas (5 minutes)

IV. Dessert - *revised* - Introduce the idea that families are making a commitment to have one more meal together or to "upgrade" their meals if they already eat together. Handout pledge cards for families to fill out at home together. Then gather everyone in a big circle for a closing "whip" such as everyone says one word that represents "food and family" to them. Whip around the circle. Allow people to pass. Make any final reminders about upcoming learning labs. Thank everyone for coming and thank those who helped out with the program. (10 minutes)



## Thought Card Questions

What do you like about the Thanksgiving meal?

If everyone ate different foods during your Thanksgiving, would that make the meal different? Why or why not?

Would all the different food requests in the cartoon make you want to cancel Thanksgiving or would you continue to celebrate?

Do you know people with different food allergies and others who follow specific diets (for ex: vegan, kosher, gluten free<sup>2</sup>). Can you imagine what you'd cook if you hosted a meal for all of them?

Rabbi Shimon said, If three have eaten at one table and have not spoken words of Torah, it is as though they had eaten of the sacrifices of the dead, as it is written “All tables are covered with vomit and filth when God is absent,” (Ezekiel 28:8)

But if three have eaten at one table and have spoken words of Torah, it is as if they had eaten from the table of God, for it is written: “He said to me, this is the table that stands before God,” (Ezekiel 41:22)  
Pirke Avot 3:4

### Thought Card Questions

What does it mean to speak “words of Torah”? Do you have to speak about a specific passage (*pasuk*) in the Torah? Could you talk about helping others or something important you learned from a friend and it still be words of Torah?

What conversations happen at a meal where no “words of Torah” are spoken?

Do you agree or disagree?

How can you make this part of your life?

When you reap the harvest in your field and overlook a sheaf in the field, do not turn back to get it; it shall go to the stranger, the fatherless and the widow --- in order that the Lord your God may bless you in all your undertakings.

When you beat down the fruit of your olive trees, do not go over them again; that shall go to the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow. When you gather the grapes of your vineyard, do not pick it over again; that shall go to the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow.

Always remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, therefore do I enjoin you to observe this commandment.

Deuteronomy 24:19-22

### Thought Card Questions

Sheaf = A bundle of cut stalks of grain or similar plants bound with straw or twine

What does this passage say you should do if you do not gather all the food the first time?

Those in need would watch the farmers harvest their fields and waited for the forgotten foods. What is the difference between this and giving *tzedakah* (charitable giving)?

Why is this commandment part of our agriculture laws? What does leaving behind food have to do with having been slaves in Egypt?

Most of us are not farmers. How do we do this mitzvah today?

The New York Times recently ran a news article with this headline:

**“Schools Dangle Carrot Snacks, but It’s a Tough Sale”**

The article began, “The new vending machine sat unnoticed as students rushed by its baby carrots, yogurt smoothies and hummus to neighbors dispensing Snapple, Doritos, Goldfish and Cheez-It. The lunch period was nearly over before a potential customer stopped to check out its offerings.

No sale

This is way too healthy for a snack,” said John A., 15, a 10th grader...”

The healthy machine sold less than 1/3 of the sales of the nearby machines that offer less nutritious choices. The top selling item from the new (healthy) machine was baked potato chips —less fat than fried chips—but almost no sales of for peach smoothies, roasted edamame, or fresh pineapple chunks...

Source:

<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/10/04/education/04vending.html>

What is going on in this school?

What do the parents and teachers who chose the new (healthy choice) food machines want?

What do the kids seem to want?

Does this surprise you?

Would this happen in your school? Why or why not?

What should the school do?

Can you suggest a healthy solution or compromise?

What do you like to have for a snack at school?

Are there different rules for snack than for lunch?



“Cookbooks that teach parents how to hide veggies in food have hit the best-seller lists. But is tricking your kids into eating vegetables really a good idea?”

New cookbooks are suggesting that parents puree/mash up healthy foods like spinach, cauliflower and broccoli and hide them in food kids like, for example, in macaroni and cheese or brownies.

There is disagreement about this way of getting kids to eat healthy food.

Parent A said, “This does not teach kids to like vegetables. It just teaches them to like macaroni and cheese and brownies.”

Parent B said, “I would say my first choice would be getting veggies enjoyed openly.”

Parent C said: “I have made several of these recipes for my kids and they have no idea they are eating zucchini, cauliflower, wheat germ, tofu, spinach and more. This cookbook is genius. I laugh all the way to the dishwasher.”

Parent D, said: “Adding veggies to brownies and mac and cheese, may trick your child into eating something healthier, but it doesn’t teach them how to eat healthy food.”

Parent E, said: “It’s not honest. You are lying to your child (even if it is to help them be healthier).”

(from the New York Times article, “Questioning the Value of ‘stealth’ Veggies,” October 26, 2007

### Thought Card Questions

What do you think about the idea of “hiding” pureed veggies in other foods?

What is the “plus” and what is the “minus?”

What vegetables do you like?

Do you like them better raw or cooked?

Have you ever grown veggies in your garden, been to a farm or to a farmers’ market?

Why do you think so many kids say they don’t like vegetables?

Which of the parents quoted above do you most agree with?

Which one do you most disagree with?

Why do you think these cookbooks are so popular with parents?

I do not like green eggs and ham!  
I do not like them, Sam-I-am.

You do not like them. So you say.  
Try them! Try them! And you may.  
Try them and you may, I say.

Sam! If you will let me be,  
I will try them. You will see.

Say! I like green eggs and ham!  
I do! I like them, Sam-I-am!  
And I would eat them in a boat!  
And I would eat them with a goat...  
And I will eat them in the rain.  
And in the dark. And on a train.  
And in a car. And in a tree.  
They are so good, so good, you see!

So I will eat them in a box.  
And I will eat them with a fox.  
And I will eat them in a house.  
And I will eat them with a mouse  
And I will eat them here and there!  
Say! I will eat them ANYWHERE!

I do so like green eggs and ham!  
Thank you! Thank you, Sam-I-Am!

From *Green Eggs and Ham* by Dr. Seuss  
Copyright 1960, 1988 by Theodor S. Geisel

### Thought Card Questions

Do you like to try new food?

Name a food that you thought you didn't like, but now you love.

How would you encourage someone to try a new food?

How does it feel when someone "yucks your yum"?

Why is it important to be open to trying new foods?

“Once when Jacob was cooking a stew, Esau came in from the open, famished. And Esau said to Jacob, “Give me some of that red stuff to gulp down, for I am famished”—which is why he was named Edom. Jacob said, “first sell me your birthright.” And Esau said, “I am at the point of death, so of what use is my birthright to me?” But Jacob said, “swear to me first”. So he swore to him, and sold his birthright to Jacob. Jacob then gave Esau bread and lentil stew; and he ate, and he drank, and he rose and he went away. Thus Esau spurned the birthright”.

Genesis 25:29-34

### **Thought Card Questions**

What does the food served represent in this story?

What goes through your mind when you help prepare a meal for other people? What about when you eat a meal served by someone else?

Home for Dinner Family Program Launch  
 Student Thought Cards

LIBBY'S FAMOUS PUMPKIN PIE

PEOPLE SAVE ROOM FOR ONE THING DURING THE HOLIDAYS,  
 AND IT'S NOT THE TURKEY.

For more than 75 years, LIBBY'S® and CARNATION® have worked together to ensure your holiday is perfect. So carry on a family tradition with a delicious, homemade LIBBY'S® Famous Pumpkin Pie for two, just in case Grandma goes for thirds! Visit [www.libbys.com](http://www.libbys.com)

LIBBY'S® Only homemade tastes this good™

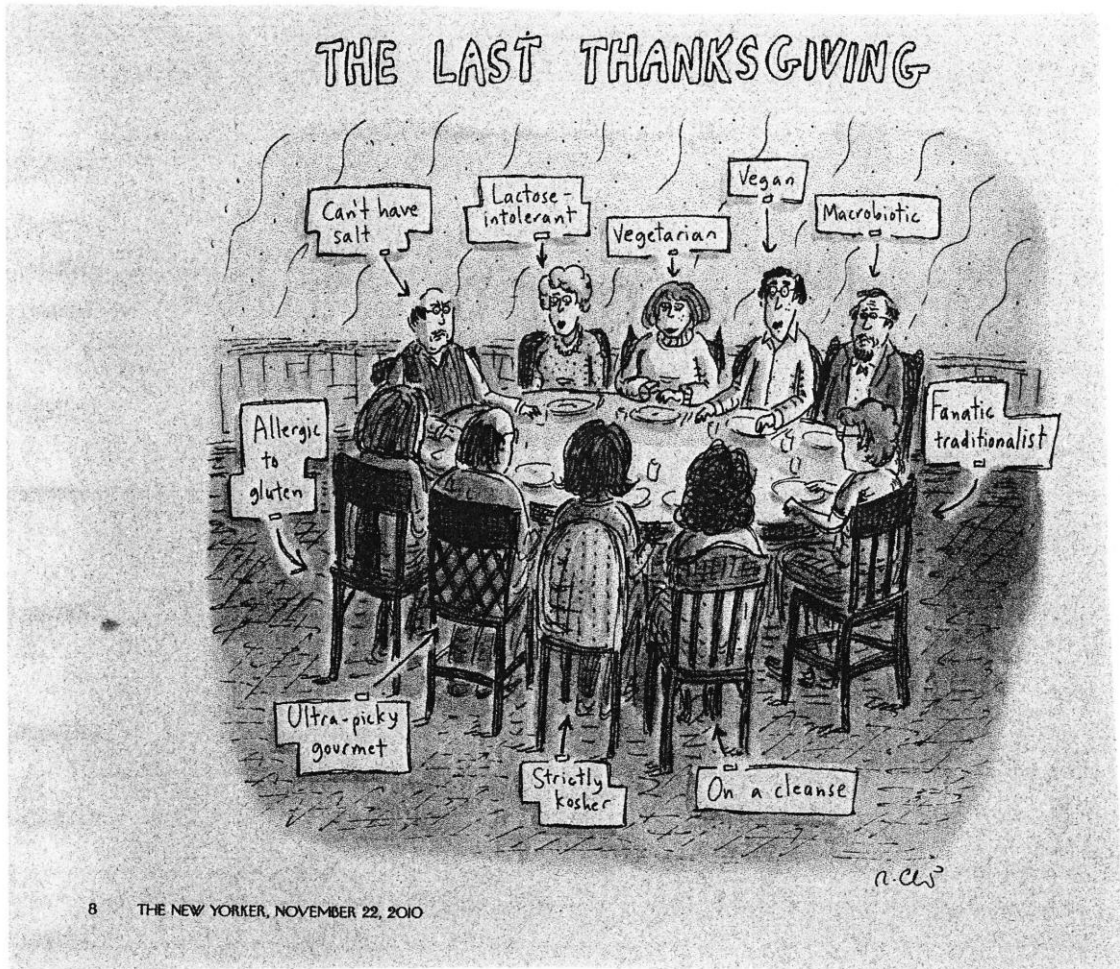
**Nestlé**  
 Good Food. Good Life.







**“How am I supposed to cook? The Internet is down”**





My survey [of the traits of healthy families] respondents' valued family table time and conversation so highly that they placed it thirteenth in a list of fifty-six possible traits...

Traditionally the family table has been a symbol of socialization. It's the gathering place for the clan, the one time each day that parents and children are assured of uninterrupted time with one another...

Therapists frequently call upon a patient's memory of the family table during their childhood in order to determine what degree of general communication and interaction there was in the patient's early family life...therapists hold that there is a relationship between the love in a home and the richness of the family table. It is to that table that love or discord eventually come...

A family counselor commented, 'the best way to discover the health of a family is to eat a few meals with them. They can't fake it...the family that wants to improve its level of communication should look closely at its attitudes toward the family table...'

Although the national trend seems to be away from the family table, the healthy families we studied are making a determined effort to offset the trend"

Dolores Curran, Traits of a Healthy Family



“Cookbooks that teach parents how to hide veggies in food have hit the best-seller lists. But is tricking your kids into eating vegetables really a good idea?”

New cookbooks are suggesting that parents puree/mash up healthy foods like spinach, cauliflower and broccoli and hide them in food kids like, for example, in macaroni and cheese or brownies.

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Parent D, said: “Adding veggies to brownies and mac and cheese, may trick your child into eating something healthier, but it doesn’t teach them how to eat healthy food.”

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(from the New York Times article, “Questioning the Value of ‘stealth’ Veggies,” October 26, 2007

You can eat food by yourself. A meal, according to my understanding anyhow, is a communal event, bringing together family members, neighbors, even strangers. At its most ordinary, it involves hospitality, giving, receiving, and gratitude...food is placed in its circumstances of history, work and companionship.

Wendell Berry, *Bringing it to the Table: On Farming and Food, Part III*,  
author's note

To find the middle ground in feeding between rigidity and uninvolved, I have found it enormously helpful to think in terms of a division of responsibility...

- Parents are responsible for what is presented to eat and the manner in which it is presented.
- Children are responsible for how much and even whether they eat.

Ellyn Satter, *How to Get Your Kid to Eat...but not too much*, p. 14

Moyers: ...when did you first learn about the playfulness of education?

Lightfoot: I'm sure I learned it at home and not in school. Our dinner table was always lively with conversation that was both serious and playful. There was never an asymmetry between the adults who had the serious conversation and the kids who watched and learned. All of us were part of the exchange. I learned very early that these two things could go together, so I found the tone of school to be quite monotonous for the most part....My own parents were very explicit about what I now regard as a counter-curriculum at home. This included reading Frederick Douglas and W.E.B. DuBois and some of the black poets from our own literary tradition. We also learned how to sing Negro Spirituals in what my parents thought was the traditional classic way....my parents also taught us an ideological counter-curriculum. They were leftist and pacifists so there was always this contrary conversation going on...

Bill Moyers interviewing Sarah Lawrence-Lightfoot in World of Ideas

There is a hasidic tradition that rebbes would be buried in a coffin made from the wood of their table. The connection was, of course, that your hospitality at your table would carry you into the World to Come

Hasidic folktale, quoted in *Food for Thought: Hazon sourcebook on Jews, Food, & Contemporary Life*, p 58.

Food is a sacred gift. We eat to keep ourselves healthy and to enhance the pleasure of life's happy events. By reminding yourself and your children who the food is from (God), what it is for (to fuel us to be of service to others), and what attitude we should have toward it (both self discipline and full enjoyment), you'll have a useful perspective for dealing with many of the struggles that come up in your family.

Moderation, celebration and sanctification are invaluable touchstones in this process...

Wendy Mogel, *The Blessing of a Skinned Knee*, p 182

### **The Importance of Family Dinners...**

“While narratives are told among family members in numerous settings, dinnertime is a preferred moment for this activity in many American families. Dinner time is a time when adults and children often come together after being apart throughout the day, a somewhat unique time period for many families wherein there is some assurance of a relatively captive audience for sounding things out. Dinnertime is thus an opportunity space – a temporal, spatial, and social moment which provides for the possibility of joint activity among family members. Families use this opportunity space in different ways: some families talk more than others; some talk only about eating; others use the moment to make plans or recount the day’s events. Whatever direction the talk takes, dinnertime is a potential forum for generating both knowledge and social order/disorder through interaction with other family members. Dinner time provides a crystallization of family processes, what activity theorists might call a ‘generically primary example’ of family life”

Elinor Ochs, Ruth Smith and Carolyn Taylor. Detective Stories at Dinnertime: Problem Solving through Co-Narration, *Cultural Dynamics*, vol II, 2, 1989

## Home for Dinner: Make it Happen

\_\_\_\_\_, 2013/ 5773

The \_\_\_\_\_ family hereby states its intention to make dinner time a meal and not just food. We strive to make dinner time a time for sharing, talking and being together. We strive to make dinner a healthy, regular, and enjoyable time of our day.

To this end, we, the \_\_\_\_\_ family pledge to add more “togetherness” by:

- \_\_\_\_\_ Meeting weekly to plan healthy meals that everyone will like
- \_\_\_\_\_ Take turns helping to cook
- \_\_\_\_\_ help set the table
- \_\_\_\_\_ help clear
- \_\_\_\_\_ buy organic food, at least for the “dirty dozen”
- \_\_\_\_\_ cook extra food and freeze it for a future meal, or bring to a friend or neighbor
- \_\_\_\_\_ other: \_\_\_\_\_

During the meal we will try to:

- \_\_\_\_\_ talk about current events
- \_\_\_\_\_ see that each person receives 5 minutes of focused attention to talk about his or her day
- \_\_\_\_\_ rotate reading a paragraph aloud from something interesting we are reading
- \_\_\_\_\_ have joke night (or other themed night) once a month
- \_\_\_\_\_ have some meals with flowers and candlelight
- \_\_\_\_\_ not to have cell phones at the table or answer the phone during meals
- \_\_\_\_\_ not turn on the radio, TV, or music during dinner
- \_\_\_\_\_ other: \_\_\_\_\_

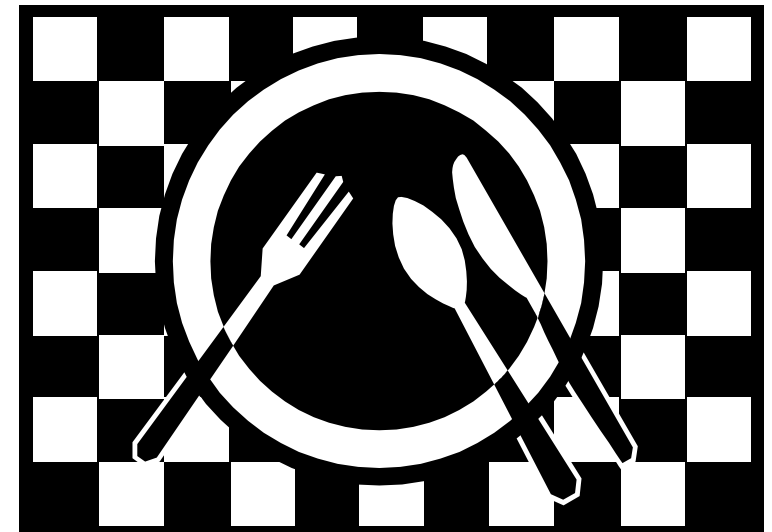
We are **really excited** to have dinner together more because:

All family members, who sign this agreement, will be **Home for Dinner**.

\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_

### B'tayavon!





# Can-DO<sup>3</sup>: A Food Justice Program for the Whole Family

## Learning Lab #2

### The Big Jewish Idea

This learning lab is structured on several Big Jewish Ideas related to food justice.

- One, presented in the story *Hands of God*, is that we can be the hands of God (an extension of the idea *adam nivra b'tzelem Elohim*, human beings are created in the image of God).
- The second Big Idea is presented in the first paragraph of *Birkat HaMazon*, that God has provided the world with enough food for all but we need to be sure it is distributed evenly.
- A third Idea, which may come up, is that we may not be able to solve the problem of hunger, writ large, but that doesn't take us off the hook from doing what we can. Note: "feeding the hungry" is not the big idea. It is a *mitzvah*, a responsibility, we take on which flows from the big Ideas.

### Advance Preparation:

#### Prepare the Families

Remind families as early as possible and several times to bring a grocery bag of food for the food bank (Ask your destination food bank for any parameters they have around food donations [usually such things as no glass containers, no fresh food, etc]). Don't tell the families what the food will be used for.

#### Set up

- If your synagogue regularly collects food donations, arrange to have the food barrel brought into the program room (It will serve as a source of additional cans as needed, and also as a source for families who have forgotten or not been able to afford to bring a bag of food)
- Room set up: Clear the center of the room for everyone to gather in a large circle on the floor (for opening and closing) and provide tables and chairs so that families will have a surface on which to build their "sculptures"

#### Materials

##### *For Hors D'oeuvres:*

- Select and set up 2-3 of the Hors D'oeuvres activities, in addition to graffiti walls, including a healthy snack (depending on the time) and name tags

##### *For Appetizer:*

- *The Hands of God* – one copy per family (Page 61-62)
- *Birkat haMazon* (first paragraph) or benchers (Page 63)

##### *For Main Course:*

- Painter tape (blue tape)
- Construction paper – at least one sheet for each family and extras for mistakes
- Can-struction Awards – optional (see below for ideas)
- Additional cans of food if your synagogue doesn't have a regular collection point (see Set up below). You can either purchase them or borrow some from the food bank or food pantry that you plan to donate to later)

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<sup>3</sup> This program was originally inspired by "Canstruction" a national effort of people working in the design field to use their talents to feed the hungry. Their largest display is held in NYC in December. Smaller displays are held in other cities. To see inspiring examples of the structures created for "Canstruction," go to [www.canstruction.org](http://www.canstruction.org). You can also find out if there is a "Canstruction" taking place in your community.

- Camera – staff member will take photos during the different phases of the learning lab capturing both families working together as well as final projects

## I. Hors D'oeuvres

Select 3 to 5 Hors D'oeuvres stations (see pages 11-14) depending on how many people you expect to attend the learning lab. At each learning lab, make sure to include healthy snacks and name tags. See pages 10-13 for stations.

## II. Appetizers

### a) Baruch Haba - Welcoming circle (10 – 15 minutes)

As you welcome the families – parents, grandparents, other guardians and the children –provide a very brief overview of the whole project for the year including reminding participants of the previous family learning lab.

If you included a song in the first learning lab, take a few minutes to reprise the song(s) here.

This is a good opportunity to check in with families about their family meals. You can ask a few people to share a highlight from a meal together.

Then provide a brief overview of the learning lab without giving away the activity for which the cans will be used!

### b) Introduction of the Big Jewish Idea – *The Hands of God* (15 minutes) page 61

There are two ways to introduce this story.

- 1) Act it out – a teacher can read the text as students or staff mime the actions;
- 2) Provide a copy of *The Hands of God*<sup>4</sup> to each family. Families spread out around the room, get comfortable, and take turns reading the story aloud to each other.

As it appears families are finishing reading, or when the miming has ended, give out the story discussion question sheet to each family. (Assume about a 5 min differential in reading the story as kids in some families may do more reading and read more slowly.)

Follow the presentation with the discussion questions for families to talk about together.

Questions for *The Hands of God*

- What do you think the title means?
- What's the big Jewish idea the author is trying to teach us?
- How does it relate to the work of feeding the hungry?
- What relevance does the idea of “God’s hands” have for you?
- What else does this story help you to think about?

### c) Introduction of the Big Jewish Idea – *Birkat HaMazon* (15 minutes) page 63

Ask families to combine their family group with a family sitting nearby so there are slightly larger groups composed of two families.

Pass out *Birkat HaMazon*<sup>5</sup> (first paragraph) along with Questions for *Birkat HaMazon* text study.

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<sup>4</sup> There are several versions of this story. The one we used is from Lawrence Kushner's , *The Book of Miracles*, UAHC Press.  
Home for Dinner: Family Learning Labs  
Hazon

Ask one person in each group to read the text aloud and then others in the group can paraphrase what the text is about. When the paraphrasing has been completed, move on to discuss these questions:

- What does this prayer say about feeding the hungry?
- Look at the last sentence. What does that mean?
- If God feeds everyone, then why are there hungry people in the world?
- It seems as if there is a problem here. Do you think we could be part of the solution... (Hint: by being God's hands?) How does it relate to the idea of being God's hands?
- What does it have to say to you?
- What ideas does it get you to think about?

### III. Main Course

#### a) Can-Struction Introduction (5 minutes)

Provide the following instructions:

“Everyone grab your bag of food bank food, find a table for your family to work at and take your stuff out of the bag.”

Once families are settled:

“You are going to use the food you brought to build a sculpture

The theme of your sculpture is \_\_\_\_\_. (Decided in advance by teacher - possibilities: Shalom, family dinner, a seasonal choice such as leaving Egypt, Israel, Tu B'Shvat)

You have 15 minutes to decide what to build *and* to actually build it.

Here are the rules:

1. You must use everything you brought in one way or another
2. Everyone in the family must have a say in the decisions you make and in the work of building your sculpture
3. You may take up to 5 additional items from the food in the middle of the room
4. The *only* other materials you are allowed to use are the painter tape and the cardboard

\*Note that there are no rules about trading with or giving excess materials to other families, which means that if they discover they can – great!

#### b) Construction (10 minutes)

#### c) Preliminary debrief (5 minutes)

After about 8-10 minutes of construction stop all activity for a preliminary debrief and get everyone's attention to go through the following questions:

Ask families to share:

- Any comments on the experience so far.
- What have you noticed?
- Are you all working together?
- Are you all listening?
- Are you all cooperating?

---

5 If there is a bencher which is used in your school/congregation you may choose to study directly from that so that it gains familiarity with your families.

Give a time warning – about 5 more minutes to finish up their can-struction.

d) Prepare for Exhibit (5 minutes)

As the families are finishing up, give each family a sheet of construction paper and a marker.

Ask them to prepare a museum style “label copy” for their sculptures. This involves choosing a title and writing a short explanation of how the statue expresses the theme. Place the “labels” beside the sculpture.

e) “Gallery Walk” (10 – 15 minutes)

Allow time for families to walk around and see all the sculptures.

Take a picture of each completed structure (if possible with the family that created it).

Optional: Give out awards such as for the most far out, best use of shapes, best use of label colors, tallest, most surprising, most wobbly, most colorful, fewest items used, most items used, etc. Ideally, for this learning lab you want to arrange to have everyone get an award to recognize their work or skip this all together. If you choose to give awards, have them pre-printed and have a few judges go around and put them out next to the sculptures rather than calling out all the awards.

f) Clean Up (10 minutes)

Collect the label copy from each sculpture, dismantle the sculptures, placing all the food items in the empty bins and getting rid of the trash.

#### **IV. Dessert (closing circle)**

Gather everyone in a big circle, before the final activity, make any final announcements. (Reminder about the journals and date of the next family lab).

Then give out the following directions:

“Hold up your hands

Today your hands have been the hands of God

Give yourselves a hand

Pat the person to your right on the back and say, *yasher koach*<sup>6</sup>

...now on your left, and say, *yasher koach*

Let’s go around the circle and each tell ONE way your hands can continue to be the hands of God in the coming week.” (allow a minute of think-time first before).

Before asking someone to start, look around the circle and choose to start with someone you know will have something to say that will start off the circle with a good choice of words. Proceed around the circle. People can choose to “pass” and you can also return to them at the end.

---

<sup>6</sup> Literally “may your strength be firm” but colloquially “good job”

Closing words:

“Go forth and be the hands of God: feed the hungry as you have today. Everyone give yourselves a final round of applause.”

### ***Min Ha’Aretz* in the Classroom: Lesson 3**

In Lesson 13: Sharing Food, students consider that millions of people in our country and billions of people in the world go hungry every day. Jewish texts provide different perspectives on sharing foods – we have a strong tradition of hospitality towards guests, and we are also required to provide food for those in need. As students explore the facts about hunger in the Bay Area, they consider what this means for the choices in their own lives.

#### **If you only have 45 minutes...**

Here is the outline of the sections you should include for a shorter version of the Can-DO learning lab. We have noted suggested revisions to fit the shorter time frame.

II. Appetizers - a) revised - welcome the families and briefly do any key check in's (5 minutes)

II. Appetizers - revised - select either b) or c) to include in the program (15 minutes)

III. Main Course - revised - follow the instructions for a) and b). During the project time, one or more educators should walk around and check in with groups on their progress. They should also hand out the supplies for labels. Give a 5 minute warning. (15 minutes)

IV. Dessert - revised - conduct a brief gallery walk (III. e) and ask each group to say share their label and say a few words about how they created that sculpture. Then gather everyone in a big circle for a closing "whip" such as everyone saying one way they can continue to help others (be in the hands of God). Whip around the circle. Allow people to pass. If there isn't enough time for everyone to share, ask a few people to share their thoughts. Make any final reminders about upcoming learning labs. Thank everyone for coming and thank those who helped out with the program. (10 minutes)

## The Hands of God

*The Book of Miracles*; by Lawrence Kushner  
U. A. H. C. Press, NY

The following story is told by my teacher, Rabbi Zalman Schachter Shalomi.

A long time ago in the northern part of Israel, in the town of Tsefat, the richest man in town was sleeping, as usual, through Shabbat morning services. Every now and then, he would almost wake up, trying to get comfortable on the hard wooden bench, and then sink back into a deep sleep. One morning he awoke just long enough to hear the chanting of the Torah verses from Leviticus 24:5-6 in which God instructs the children of Israel to place twelve loaves of chalah on a table in the ancient wilderness tabernacle.

When services ended, the wealthy man woke up, not realizing that all he had heard was the Torah reading about how God wanted twelve loaves of chalah. He thought that God had come to him in his sleep and had asked him personally to bring twelve loaves of chalah to God. The rich man felt honored that God should single him out, but he also felt a little foolish. Of all the things God could want from a person, twelve loaves of chalah did not seem very important. But who was he to argue with God. He went home and baked the bread.

Upon returning to the synagogue, he decided the only proper place for his holy gift was alongside the Torah scrolls in the ark. He carefully arranged the loaves and said to God, "Thank You for telling me what You want of me. Pleasing You makes me very happy." Then he left.

No sooner had he gone than the poorest Jew in the town, the synagogue janitor, entered the sanctuary. All alone, he spoke to God. "O Lord, I am so poor. My family is starving; we have nothing to eat. Unless You perform a miracle for us, we will surely perish." Then, as was his custom, he walked around the room to tidy it up. When he ascended the bimah and opened the ark, there before him were twelve loaves of chalah! "A miracle!" exclaimed the poor man, "I had no idea You worked so quickly! Blessed are You, O God, who answers our prayers." Then he ran home to share the bread with his family.

Minutes later, the rich man returned to the sanctuary, curious to know whether or not God ate the chalah. Slowly he ascended the bimah, opened the ark, and saw that the chalot were gone. "Oh, my God!" he shouted, "You really ate my chalot! I thought You were teasing. This is wonderful. You can be sure that I'll bring another twelve loaves-and with raisins in them too!"

The following week, the rich man brought a dozen loaves to the synagogue and again left them in the ark. Minutes later, the poor man entered the sanctuary. "God, I don't know how to say this, but I'm out of food again. Seven loaves we ate, four we sold, and one we gave to charity. But now, nothing is left and, unless You do another miracle, we surely will starve." He approached the ark and slowly opened its doors. "Another miracle!" he cried, "twelve more loaves, and with raisins too! Thank You God; this is wonderful!"

The chalah exchange became a weekly ritual that continued for many years. And, like most rituals that become routine, neither man gave it much thought. Then, one day, the rabbi, detained in the sanctuary longer than usual, watched the rich man place the dozen loaves in the ark and the poor man redeem them.

The rabbi called the two men together and told them what they had been doing.

"I see," said the rich man sadly, "God doesn't really eat chalah."

"I understand," said the poor man, "God hasn't been baking chalah for me afterall."

They both feared that now God no longer would be present in their lives.

Then the rabbi asked them to look at their hands. "Your hands," he said to the rich man, "are the hands of God giving food to the poor. And your hands," said the rabbi to the poor man, "also are the hands of God, receiving gifts from the rich. So you see, God can still be present in your lives. Continue baking and continue taking. Your hands are the hands of God."

**Questions for the story *The Hands of God***

- What do you think the title means?
- What's the big Jewish idea the author is trying to teach us?
- How does it relate to the work of feeding the hungry?
- What relevance does the idea of "God's hands" have for you?
- What else does this story lead you to think about?

ברוך אתה יהוה אלהינו מלך העולם, הן את-העולם כלו  
בטובו, בחן בחסד וברחמים. הוא נותן לחם לכל-בשר, כי  
לעולם חסדו. ובטובו הגדול תמיד לא חסר לנו, ואל יחסר  
לנו מזון לעולם ועד, בעבור שמו הגדול, כי הוא אל ון  
ומפרנס לכל, ומטיב לכל, ומכין מזון לכל-בריותיו אשר  
ברא. ברוך אתה יהוה, הן את-הכל.

Praised are You Adonai our God, Ruler of the universe, who graciously sustains the whole world with kindness and compassion. God provides food for every creature, for God's love endures forever. God, abounding in kindness, has never failed us; in God's name, may our nourishment be assured forever. God sustains all life and is good to all, providing every creature with food and sustenance. Praised are You Adonai, who sustains all life.

Translation from *Yedid Nefesh Benscher*  
Edited by Rabbi Joshua Cahan

### Questions for *Birkat HaMazon* text study

- What does this prayer say about feeding the hungry?
- Does God feel everywhere?
- How can we understand that there are hungry people in the world?
- How does the teaching from the *Birkat HaMazon* help us understand the idea of food for all?
- How does it relate to the idea of being God's hands?
- What does it have to say to you?
- What ideas does it get you to think about?



## ***Brachot: The Power of Blessings***

### **Learning Lab #3**

#### **The Big Jewish Idea**

At the core of this **Home for Dinner** Lab is that saying a *bracha* is an act of acknowledging a gift. Our tradition provides us with a whole system of *brachot*, blessings, whose purpose is to teach us to see many of the elements of our daily life as gifts and to express appreciation for them. Traditional *brachot* run the gamut from the most ordinary of items (bread for which we say the *brachot* called *HaMotzi*) to the most elevated, the gift of life itself (which is what we are doing when we say the *bracha* called *Shebecheyanu*) and almost everything in between from new clothes to rainbows to shooting stars to bad news.

The act of saying a *bracha* has transformative powers as well --- in a way, when we say a *bracha* we are transforming something ordinary into a gift from God which makes eating (or seeing a shooting star) an experience of God's "grace." (Not a word used much by Jews but it expresses perfectly the idea that these are unearned and undeserved gifts.)

The most direct connection from this big idea to **Home for Dinner** is obviously the fact that we say *brachot* both before and after we eat whether it is a meal or a snack. Teaching about these food-related *brachot* in particular gives us the opportunity to teach more about the context of these *brachot* in the larger *bracha* system and in Jewish tradition writ-large.

It's important to note that this view of *brachot* may be new to most of your students and their parents, many of whom have learned to think of *HaMotzi* as "blessing the bread" or "blessing God," (neither of which is true). It is also the case that the idea of "grace after meals" may be an idea they associate with Christian practice rather than with our own.

This is indeed a big idea and **Home for Dinner** Family Lab #4 will expand on it.

#### **Preparing the Families:**

Remind families to bring their Family Dinner Journals and to bring a can of food for the food bank.

#### **Materials**

*For Hors D'oeuvres:*

- Select and set up the Hors D'oeuvres activities, including a healthy snack and name tags

*For Main Course:*

- *Brachot* Thought Cards – print four different texts so they are colored coded with each text its own color (pg 68-71)
- 10 *Brachot* Charades Cards for each family – cut up the sheet and divide them into small bags so that each family gets 10 (pg 72)
- Tiny bags (silk or paper) to put *Brachot* charade Cards in for each family
- Copies of *Brachot* Handout (pg 73-74) for each family
- Handouts for Parents for taking home [optional]: Barbara Kingsolver excerpt (pg 75); Alice Walker excerpt (pg 76).
- Glue, scissors

## I. Hors D'oeuvres

Select 3 to 5 Hors D'oeuvres stations (see pages 11-14) depending on how many people you expect to attend the learning lab. At each learning lab, make sure to include healthy snacks and name tags. See pages 10-13 for stations.

## II. Appetizers

### a) Baruch Haba – Welcoming Circle

Welcome the families – parents, grandparents, other guardians and the children –provide a brief overview of the whole project for the year including reminding participants of previous family meal learning labs.

Opening with a song can help to knit the community together. To maintain continuity, use whatever songs you chose for the previous family learning labs. In addition, for today, add *Shebebeyanu*. If you have a song leader whom you can call upon, this would be a great time to introduce Debbie Friedman's (z"l) *Rainbow Blessing* song.

This is a good opportunity to check in with families about their family meals. You can ask a few people to share a highlight from a meal together.

### b) Introducing the Big Jewish Idea

Hold up one slice of bread (a muffin cookie or something similar) and an identical slice of bread that is gift-wrapped (participants don't know that is the same as the unwrapped item).

Ask the following questions.

“What is the difference is between these two? (Take guesses, hunches. Allow adequate think time, don't rush)

What if I unwrap this one? (Unwrap; slowly and dramatically; let them see that the two are identical)

Now, what's the difference between them? (Take answers)

Be sure to include the following idea:

Both are gifts. The only difference is one of world view - one looks like a gift; one looks more ordinary.

Most people see a slice of bread but the person who says a *bracha* over the bread sees a gift.”

## III. Main Course

### a) Appetizer Review (5 minutes)

Provide a summary of the learning from the first activity:

“A *bracha* teaches us to see the bread as we would if it were gift-wrapped.

SO–what is a *bracha*? What's its purpose?” (Take answers)

A *bracha* is...

- Transformation - it changes the “food” or the X into a gift from God.
- Changes the experience of eating itself.
- A common place event becomes an experience of God's caring.”

Who's blessing what?

When saying a *bracha*, like HaMotzi, we are *not* blessing the bread *nor* are we blessing God; we are acknowledging a gift; we are saying thank-you for a gift.

b) Brachot Text study (15 - 20 minutes)

Handout *Brachot* Thought Cards (each text on different color paper) so everyone receives one text. (They are printed 3 or 4-up for ease of preparation on pages 68-71).

Ask everyone to find one other person who has the same color text card and study it with that person for 5-7 minutes.

Now ask each pair to split up and find someone with a different color text card.

“Take turns explaining your text to your new partner for 5 – 7 minutes.”

Bring the group back together and summarize again:

Why do we say *brachot*?

What does a *bracha* do?

How does it work?

c) Brachot Charades (25 minutes)

Ask 2-3 families to join together (about 6-8 people per group).

Hand out *Brachot* handout – pages 73-74-- (or copies of *Siddur Sim Shalom* or other siddurim that includes all of the *Birchot HaNebenin*) – A few per group

Hand one bag of 10 *Brachot* Charades Cards to each group. Charades are on page 72.

Group members take turns pulling a charade card, and performing it as a charade to their group. Others in the group guess what is being acted out. When they have guessed correctly, they can work together to find the matching *bracha* in the siddur or on the *Birchot HaNebenin* handout.

When a group has completed the 10 charades, while still in groups, direct them to another round in which they each act out something they themselves are grateful for. Group members guess what it is.

d) **Home for Dinner: Family Meals Journal - Family *Brachot* Book** (30 minutes)

Families should take out their Family Meal Journals – have extra paper for those who forgot their journals to use and then paste into their journals when they are back home.

Select 1-3 (depending on time) *Brachot* Charade cards (you might want to focus on the food blessings, but you can pick whichever ones your family wants to) and glue them into the journal, one per page. Copy in the corresponding blessing and illustrate each one.

Add 1 -2 other things you are thankful for to include in the journal.

#### **IV. Dessert**

Gather everyone in a big circle for a closing “whip”. Have each person share something they would like to compose a blessing for or something they are thankful for. Whip around the circle. Allow people to pass, but return to offer them a turn at the end.

Include any reminders or announcements and distribute (optional) handouts for parents.

Closing song: Review *shebeheyanu* and the Rainbow Blessing Song along with any other songs you have been singing.

#### ***Min Ha’Aretz* in the Classroom: Lesson 11 & 14**

Lesson 11: Blessing Before the Meal and Lesson 14: Blessings After the Meal are appropriate to be taught in conjunction with *Brachot: The Power of Blessings* and *Brachot: Hooray for the World*. In Lesson 11, students consider the different blessings for a particular food or meal and the role of saying traditional (and non-traditional) blessings before eating. The students participate in a mindfulness eating activity, which includes the appropriate blessing, and allows them to think about the connection between agriculture, farming, and blessings. In Lesson 14, the *Birkat Hamazon* is introduced and connected to the scriptural source from which it is drawn. Students investigate why we are required to say the blessing after we eat. The *Harachaman* prayers are further explored and students then write their own.

#### **If you only have 45 minutes...**

Here is the outline of the sections you should use for a shorter version of the *Brachot: The Power of Blessings* learning lab. We have noted suggested revisions to fit the shorter time frame.

II. Appetizers - a) - welcome the families and do any key check in's for just the first 5 minutes (5 minutes)

II. Appetizers b) and III. Main Course a) - revised - combine these two elements (5 minutes)

III. Main Course b) (15 minutes)

III. Main Course c) - *revised* - each group should perform 3-5 charade cards and then move on to acting out something they are grateful for in their lives. (15 minutes)

IV. Dessert (5 minutes)

א"ר חנינא בר פפא: כל הנהנה מן העוה"ז בלא ברכה כאילו גוזל להקב"ה וכנסת  
ישראל

Rabbi Hanina bar Papa taught: To enjoy anything of this world without a bracha is like stealing from God and the Community of Israel.

Talmud, Masechet Brachot, 35b

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שנא' (תהילים כד) לה' הארץ ומלואה ר' לוי רמי כתיב לה' הארץ ומלואה וכתיב (תהילים קטו) השמים שמים לה' והארץ נתן לבני אדם. לא קשיא כאן קודם ברכה כאן אחר ברכה

It is written, *The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof* (Psalm 24:1). But--we also read, *God has given the earth to human beings* (Psalm 115:16). [Don't these seem to contradict each other?] There is no contradiction. The first verse reflects the situations before we say bracha and the second verse refers to the context after the bracha.

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Our Rabbis have taught: It is forbidden for a person to enjoy anything of this world without a *berakha*, and if anyone enjoys anything of this world without a *berakha*, that person commits sacrilege. Rav Judah said in the name of Samuel: To enjoy anything of this world without a benediction is like making personal use of things consecrated to heaven,

Masekhet Berakhot, page 35b

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Masekhet Berakhot, page 35b

<b>seeing a rainbow</b>	<b>seeing the ocean</b>	<b>smelling fragrant flowers</b>
<b>smelling citrus</b>	<b>meeting the president of the United States</b>	<b>seeing a shooting star</b>
<b>hearing good news</b>	<b>hearing bad news</b>	<b>hearing thunder</b>
<b>eating banana bread</b>	<b>lighting Hanukkah candles</b>	<b>lighting Shabbat candles</b>
<b>eating ice cream</b>	<b>eating blueberries</b>	<b>meeting a great Torah scholar</b>
<b>sitting in a sukkah</b>	<b>seeing Niagara Falls</b>	<b>seeing lightning</b>
<b>eating bread</b>	<b>putting on new clothes</b>	<b>seeing the grand canyon or Mt Rainer</b>



The following blessings start with the formula:	
Blessed are you, Adonai, our God, ruler of the universe <i>Baruch ata adonai eloheinu melech ha'olam</i>	בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
Upon seeing lightning, shooting stars, or other wonders of nature:	
who makes the works of creation <i>'oseh ma'aseh bereishit</i>	עוֹשֶׂה מַעֲשֵׂה בְּרֵאשִׁית
Upon seeing the ocean:	
who made the great sea <i>she'asa et ha-yam ha-gadol</i>	שֶׁעָשָׂה אֶת הַיָּם הַגָּדוֹל
Upon hearing thunder or a powerful storm:	
whose strength and power fill the world <i>she-kocho u-gevurato maleh olam</i>	שִׁכְחוּ וּגְבוּרָתוֹ מְלֵא עוֹלָם
Upon seeing exceptionally beautiful creatures or trees:	
that there are such as this in your world <i>she-kacha lo be'olamo</i>	שִׁכְּכָה לוֹ בְּעוֹלָמוֹ
Upon seeing a rainbow:	
who remembers the covenant, is faithful to it, and keeps its promise <i>zocher ha-berit ve-ne'eman bi-v'rito ve-kayam be-ma'amaro</i>	זֹכֵר הַבְּרִית וְנֶאֱמָן בְּבְרִיתוֹ וְקִים בְּמַאֲמָרוֹ
Upon smelling fragrant herbs, grasses, or flowers:	
who creates fragrant plants <i>borei isvei vesamim</i>	בוֹרֵא עֹשֵׂבֵי בְשָׂמִים
Upon smelling fragrant fruit:	
who gives pleasant fragrance to fruits <i>ha-notein reiach tov ba-perot</i>	הַנוֹתֵן רֵיחַ טוֹב בַּפְּרוֹת
Upon meeting an outstanding Torah scholar:	
who has shared wisdom with the reverent <i>she-chalak me-chachmato li-reiav</i>	שֶׁחָלַק מִחֲכָמָתוֹ לִירְאָיו
Upon seeing a Monarch or Head of State:	
who has given glory to humanity <i>she-natan mi-k'vodo l-vasar va-dam</i>	שֶׁנָּתַן מִכְבוֹדוֹ לְבָשָׂר וְדָם
Upon wearing new clothes:	
who clothes the naked <i>malbish arumim</i>	מַלְבִּישׁ עֲרֻמִּים
Upon hearing good news (from which others as well as yourself will benefit):	
who is good and does good <i>ha-tov v-hameitiv</i>	הַטוֹב וְהַמֵּיטִיב
Upon hearing bad news:	
the true judge <i>dayan ha-emet</i>	דֵּין הָאֱמֶת
The following is traditionally recited upon doing or seeing something for the first time (in a year):	
who has granted us life, sustained us, and brought us to this day <i>she-he-chiyanu ve-kiyemanu ve-hiqi'anu la-z'man ha-zeh</i>	שֶׁהֵחֵינּוּ וְקִיְמָנוּ, וְהִגִּיעָנוּ לְזִמְנֵי הַזֶּה

The following blessings start with the formula:	
Blessed are you, Adonai, our God, ruler of the universe <i>Baruch ata adonai elobeinu melech ha'olam</i>	בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם.
Before eating bread:	
who brings forth bread from the earth <i>ha-motzi lechem min ha'aretz</i>	הַמוֹצִיא לֶחֶם מִן הָאָרֶץ
Before eating grains:	
creator of types of nourishment <i>borei minei mezonot</i>	בוֹרֵא מִיְּנֵי מְזוֹנוֹת
Before drinking wine or grape juice:	
creator of the fruit of the vine <i>borei p'ri ha-gafen</i>	בוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הַגָּפֶן.
Before eating fruit from trees:	
creator of fruit of the tree <i>borei p'ri ha'eitz</i>	בוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הָעֵץ
Before eating fruit or vegetables from the earth:	
creator of fruit of the ground <i>borei p'ri ha'adamah</i>	בוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הָאֲדָמָה
Before eating meat, dairy, fish, and all non-grape based drinks:	
by whose word all things came to be <i>she-ha-kol nehiyeh bid'varo</i>	שֶׁהַכֹּל נִהְיָה בְּדַבְּרוֹ

The following blessings, recited over specific <i>mitzvot</i> – commandments, start with the formula:	
Blessed are you, Adonai, our God, ruler of the universe, who instilled in us the holiness of <i>mitzvot</i> , by commanding us to... <i>Baruch ata adonai elobeinu melech ha'olam, asher kid'shanu be-mitzvotav, ve-tsivanu</i>	בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו, וְצִוָּנוּ
Lighting Shabbat candles	
kindle the lights of Shabbat <i>le-hadlik ner shel Shabbat</i>	לְהַדְלִיק נֵר שֶׁל שַׁבָּת
Upon sitting in a Sukkah (for a meal):	
dwell in the Sukkah <i>lei-shein ba-sukkah</i>	לֵישֵׁב בַּסֻּכָּה
Upon lighting Chanukkah candles:	
who has commanded us to kindle the Hanukkah lights. Blessed are you, Adonai, our God, ruler of the universe, who performed miracles for our ancestors in those days, at this time. <i>le-hadlik ner shel Hanukkah</i> <i>Baruch ata adonai elobeinu melech ha'olam, she-asa nisim la-avoteinu ba-yamim bahem ba-zman ha-zeh.</i>	לְהַדְלִיק נֵר שֶׁל חֲנֻכָּה בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם שֶׁעָשָׂה נִסִּים לְאַבוֹתֵינוּ בַּיָּמִים הָהֵם בַּזְּמַן הַזֶּה.

## Animal Dreams

“Most of the dances have to do with rain,” he said. “Here that’s what everything hangs on.”

Santa Claus kachinas and the beauty of the spectacle notwithstanding, I still felt outside of it. “So you make this deal with the gods. You do these dances and they’ll send rain and good crops and the whole works? And nothing bad will ever happen. Right.’ Prayer had always struck me as more or less a glorified attempt at a business transaction. A rain dance even more so.

I thought I might finally have offended Loyd past the point of no return, like stealing the lobster from frozen foods that time, to get myself fired. But Loyd was just thinking. After a minute he said, “No, it’s not like that. It’s not making a deal, bad things can still happen, but you want to try not to *cause* them to happen. It has to do with keeping things in balance.

“In balance.”

“Really, it’s like the spirits have made a deal with *us*.”

“And what is the deal?” I asked.

“We’re on our own. The spirits have been good enough to let us live here and use the utilities, and we’re saying: We know how nice you’re being. We appreciate the rain, we appreciate the sun, we appreciate the deer we took. Sorry if we messed up anything. You’ve gone to a lot of trouble, and we’ll try to be good guests.”

“Like a note you’d send somebody after you stayed in their house?”

“Exactly like that. “Thanks for letting me sleep on your couch. I took some beer out of the refrigerator, and I broke a coffee cup. Sorry, I hope it wasn’t your favorite one.””

I laughed because I understood “in balance.” I would have called it “keeping the peace,” or maybe “remembering your place,” but I liked it. “It’s a good idea,” I said. “Especially since we’re still here sleeping on God’s couch. We’re permanent house guests.”

“Yep, we are. Better remember how to put everything back how we found it.”

It was a new angle on religion, for me. I felt a little embarrassed for my blunt interrogation. And the more I thought about it, even more embarrassed for my bluntly utilitarian culture. “The way they tell it to us Anglos, God put the earth here for us to use, westward-ho. Like a special little playground.”

“...Well, that explains a lot,” said Loyd.

Barbara Kingsolver  
*Animal Dreams*  
Harper pub  
pp. 239-240

## The Color Purple

Here's the thing, say Shug. The thing I believe. God is inside you and inside everybody else. You come into the world with God. But only them that search for it inside find it. And sometimes it just manifest itself even if you not looking, or don't know what you looking for. Trouble do it for most folks, I think. Sorrow, lord. Feeling like shit.

It? I ast.

Yeah, It. God ain't a he or a she, but a It.

But what do it look like? I ast.

Don't look like nothing, she say. It ain't a picture show. It ain't something you can look at apart from anything else, including yourself. I believe God is everything, say Shug. Everything that is or ever was or ever will be. And when you can feel that, and be happy to feel that, you've found It.

Shug a beautiful something, let me tell you. She frown a little, look out cross the yard, lean back in her chair, look like a big rose.

She say, My first step from the old white man was trees. Then air. The birds. Then other people. But one day when I was sitting quite and feeling like a motherless child, which I was, it come to me: that feeling of being part of everything, not separate at all. I knew that if I cut a tree, my arm would bleed. And I laughed and I cried and I run all around the house. I knew just what it was. In fact, when it happen, you can't miss it. It sort of like you know what, she say, grinning and rubbing high up on my thigh.

*Shug!* I say.

Oh, she say. God love all them feelings. That's some of the best stuff God did. And when you know God loves 'em you enjoys 'em a lot more. You can just relax, go with everything that's going, and praise God by liking what you like.

God don't think it dirty? I ast.

Naw, she say. God made it. Listen, God love everything you love – and a mess of stuff you don't. But more than anything else, God love admiration.

You saying God vain? I ast.

Naw, she say. Not vain, just wanting to share a good thing. I think it pisses God off if you walk by the color purple in a field somewhere and don't notice it.

Alice Walker  
The Color Purple  
Pocket Books, NY, 1982  
pp. 202-203

## ***Brachot*: Hooray for the World**

### **Learning Lab #4**

#### **The Big Jewish Idea**

This **Home for Dinner** Family Meals learning lab continues the exploration started in the previous family lab, *Brachot*: The Power of Blessings, to further explore that saying a *bracha* is an act of acknowledging a gift. As families consider the gifts they are grateful for, they have the opportunity to connect further with the big idea of this learning lab. For complete background on *brachot* in relation to **Home for Dinner**, see the introduction to the previous lab.

#### **Advance Preparation:**

song: be sure song, “Hurrah for the World”, has been located and learned by song leader

#### Prepare the Families:

- Ask students and their parents to bring their Family Dinner Journals to the learning lab (started during the **Home for Dinner** Family Launch Program)
- Remind each family to bring a can of food for the food bank or pantry along with their contribution to potluck
- Guidelines for potluck meal (if you choose to have a meal) pages 9-10

#### Prepare for the Potluck

- Review the Guide to Planning a Family Meals Potluck Dinner (pg 9-10) in order to organize the Potluck
- Alternate to potluck: each family can come prepared to tell about a special family recipe

#### Materials

*For Hors D’oeuvres:*

- Select and set up the Hors D’oeuvres activities, including a healthy snack and name tags

*For Main Course:*

- *Hooray for the World* song lyrics (pg 80)
- *Hooray for the World* music (download from Amazon.com for \$0.99) & speakers to play song
- Scratch paper
- Pencils
- Markers or crayons

#### **I. Hors D’oeuvres**

Select 2 to 3 Hors D’oeuvres stations (pages 11-14) depending on how many people you expect to attend the learning lab. At each learning lab, make sure to include healthy snacks and name tags.

#### **II. Appetizers**

##### a) Opening Song (5 – 10 minutes)

To maintain continuity, use whatever songs you chose for the previous family learning labs. In addition, for today, add *Shebechyanu* and *HaMotzi* and Debbie Friedman’s (z”l) *Rainbow Blessing* song.

Then welcome the families – parents, grandparents, other guardians and the children –provide a reminder of the goal of the project for the year including reminding participants of previous family meal learning labs.

You can ask a few people to share a highlight from a family meal together.

**b) Introducing the Big Jewish Idea (5 minutes)**

The Big Jewish Idea for this learning lab builds upon the previous learning lab. Take a few minutes to specifically remind everyone about what they experienced and learned last time. (If you didn't run Learning Lab 2, Brachot: The Power of Blessings, do activity 2B on page 65).

What is a bracha? [A bracha expresses appreciation for a gift, an experience of God's grace]

What is its purpose? [It reminds us to be grateful for many things]

Why do we say brachot? [So that we become people who appreciate, are thankful and don't take things for granted]

Remember the charades we played last time? What are some of the things we have *brachot* for? What do you remember from our charades?

### **III. Main Course Part 1**

**a) Hooray for the World (15 minutes)**

Listen to the song as you pass out song sheets. Ideally, your music person (or musically talented family or parent) has learned the song in advance and will sing to the group; otherwise, download an mp3 file and play it for the group.

The group should sing along as they become familiar with the song. Sing it through a few times.

This song, Hooray for the World, expresses exactly the feeling that we try to have when we say a *bracha*:

*HaMotzi* = Hooray for this bread!

*L'Hadlik ner shel Shabbat* = Hooray it's *Shabbat*!

**b) Create Your Own Verse (5 Minutes)**

Give out scratch paper and pencils and ask each family to work together to compose their own verse. (Extra credit for Hebrew) When the family has written a verse they are pleased with, have them copy over neatly (for a finished version).

### **IV. Main Course Part 2 – Potluck Meal (Optional)**

Before you start the meal, ask each family if they'd like to "introduce" their dish. They can share who made it, highlight any interesting ingredients in the dish, tell any story they might have about the dish (this is our family's favorite weeknight dinner or I make this dessert for Shabbat, etc).

Begin the potluck with *HaMotzi*. Hand out the food *brachot* so that families can say the appropriate *bracha* as they taste different foods.

Close the dinner with the *Birkat HaMazon*.

Alternate: If you are not having a potluck

- a) Have each family share about a special family food or a family story which involves food
- b) Continue on to part V on the next page

### **V. Main Course Part 3**

a) Family Hurray for the World Blessing Show (20 minutes)

Gather the families in a circle away from the dinner tables. Have everyone sing the chorus to Hooray for the World together several times and then have *each* family step forward or stand up and sing (or read) their original verse. Sing the chorus in between each verse.

(Keep their verses so you can make copies and return them to everyone. Ideally, you will type up the whole “new” song and send it out to each family. They will be able to glue or staple the whole new song into their family dinner journal. Be sure to sing it at the next learning lab.)

## VI. Dessert

Include any reminders or announcements.

End with a final rendition of the *Hooray for the World* chorus.

## ***Min Ha’Aretz* in the Classroom: Lesson 11 & 14**

Lesson 11: Blessing Before the Meal and Lesson 14: Blessings After the Meal are appropriate to be taught in conjunction with *Brachot: The Power of Blessings* and *Brachot: Hooray for the World*. In Lesson 11, students consider the different blessings for a particular food or meal and the role of saying traditional (and non-traditional) blessings before eating. The students participate in a mindfulness eating activity, which includes the appropriate blessing, and allows them to think about the connection between agriculture, farming, and blessings. In Lesson 14, the *Birkat Hamazon* is introduced and connected to the scriptural source from which it is drawn. Students investigate why we are required to say the blessing after we eat. The *Harachaman* prayers are further explored and students then write their own.

### **If you only have 45 minutes...**

Here is the outline of the sections you should use for a shorter version of the *Brachot: Hooray for the World* learning lab. We have noted suggested revisions to fit the shorter time frame.

II. Appetizers a) and b) - revised - combine into a welcome and remind everyone of the Big Jewish Idea for this program that builds upon the previous program (10 minutes)

III. Main Course Part 1 (20 minutes)

V. Main Course Part 3 - revised - sing the song once more and then go around and have each family read their verse, close with a final chorus all together (10 minutes)

VI. Dessert (5 minutes)

## Hooray for the World

### Chorus

Hooray for the world I'm glad to be on it  
Hooray for the world I'm glad to be on it  
Hooray for the world it's a special place  
We've got Mother Nature and the human race

The world's got buffalo, the world's got bees  
The world's got jellyfish swimming in the seas

We've got beavers and bears, bats and bugs  
Miniature poodles and slimy old bugs... Oh

### Chorus

The world's got salami, the world's got cheese  
We got maple syrup and mulberries  
We got egg foo young, bagels and lox  
Corn on the cob and raisins in a box... Oh

### Chorus

We got moms and dads, uncles and aunts  
Brothers and sisters, grandmas and gramps  
We got neighbors next door, kids down the street  
Everywhere we go we've got new friends to meet... Oh

### Chorus

(Repeat)

*Words and Music by Kathy and Red Grammer  
Teaching Peace, 1986 – *Smilin' Atcha Music**



## Home for Dinner Song Sheet

### סלאאם

עוד יבוא שלום עלינו  
עוד יבוא שלום עלינו  
עוד יבוא שלום עלינו  
ועל כולם (x2)

סלאאם  
עלינו ועל כולם  
סלאאם, סלאאם (x2)

### Salaam

*Od yavo shalom aleinu  
Od yavo shalom aleinu  
Od yavo shalom aleinu  
Ve al kulam (x2)*

*Salaam (Salaam)  
Aleinu ve-al kol ha-olam,  
Salaam, Salaam (x2)*

### Salaam

Peace will come upon us  
Peace will come upon us  
Peace will come upon us  
And on everyone.

Salaam ('peace' in Arabic)  
Upon us and on everyone  
Salaam, Salaam

*Music and lyrics by Sheva.*

### עושה שלום

עושה שלום במרומיו  
הוא יעשה שלום עלינו  
ועל כל ישראל  
ואמרו אמן

### Oseh Shalom

*Oseh shalom bimromav  
Hu ya-aseh shalom aleinu  
V'al kol Yisrael  
V'imru, amen*

### Oseh Shalom

May he who makes peace in high places  
Make peace for us  
And for all Israel.  
And let us say, amen.

*Concluding sentence found throughout Jewish liturgy (including Kaddish Shalem and Mourners Kaddish)*

### הנה מה טוב

הנה מה טוב ומה נעים  
שבת אחים גם יחד

### Hinei Mah Tov

*Hinei mah tov u-ma na-im,  
Shevet achim gam yachad*

### Hinei Mah Tov

Behold how good and how pleasant it is  
For all of us to dwell together in unity.

*Words from Psalm 133:1*

### שהחינו

ברוך אתה יי אלוהינו  
מלך העולם  
שהחינו וקימנו  
והגינו לזמן הזה

### Shehekheyanu

*Baruch attah adonai eloheinu  
Melekh ha-olam,  
She-he'kheyanu ve'kiy'manu  
v'higi'anu la-zman hazeh*

### Blessing for Something New

Praised are you, Adonai our God,  
Ruler of the Universe  
Who has given us life, sustained us,  
And helped bring us to this day

*Prayer recited when wearing new clothes or using something new for the first time.*

## Family Cooking and Learning Program Learning Lab #5

### **The Big Jewish Idea**

Dinner is a time when families can come together after being apart throughout the day, break bread, connect, re-connect, and be a family. Family dinner time is when Jewish values and ethics are passed from parents to children. Parents and their children are overscheduled and under-connected. The Family Cooking and Learning Program, originally developed as part of *Min Ha'Aretz*, allows parents and their children to slow down and make a meal together with their community. Parents and students will prepare the toppings for make-your-own pizzas and cut up the ingredients for make-your-own salads. As the individual mini pizzas cook, the room will be transformed from a cooking to a dining space. A first course of salads can be made and consumed as the pizzas cool.

The second half of the program provides a space for students and parents to learn together and from one another. A text study and activities based on To Till & To Tend (Genesis 2:15) provide the context for parent-student conversations about food, the environment, and Judaism.

#### Note about Meal Timing:

If the program is run during the dinner hour, by the time you sit down, it might be later than some children normally eat. A few light, healthy snacks can be available on a side table before the meal is served. Examples of appropriate snacks include: hummus and vegetables (such as celery, broccoli, peppers) and pita; whole wheat crackers and cheeses; fresh fruit.

#### Note about Prep Time:

Faculty who are coordinating this event should plan to begin preparations about one hour before the start time. Prep includes setting up tables with food and other items on the tables.

#### Note about dessert:

This activity does not include time for preparation of or eating dessert. At the conclusion of the program, you may decide to have fresh fruit salad and sorbet available as parents and children talk and linger.

### **Advance Preparation:**

#### Facility Requirements

- Kitchen: ovens and adequate sinks for hand washing
- Large room: tables and chair for approximately 50 people

## Materials

### *Equipment*

- 2 large ovens (or more depending on number of guests)
- 4 baking sheets
- 20 cutting boards
- 20 kid-friendly knives (extra-thick handles)
- 3 large bowls (for cheese, sauce & lettuce)
- 10 medium bowls (for veggies & sauce)
- 2-3 bowls (for scraps)
- 2-3 cheese graters
- Measuring spoons
- Measuring cups
- 1 can opener
- 4-5 pitchers (for drinks)
- Serving utensils
  - 2 sets of tongs (cheese & lettuce)
  - 4-5 large spoons
  - 4-5 large forks
- 50 - 100 plates (plates are used for preparing the pizza and after to eat the pizza)
- 50 forks & knives
- 50 cups
- Napkins
- Hand soap
- Dish soap
- Aluminum foil
- Pen
- Towels

A note about ingredients: The veggies listed below are simply to provide a guide in terms of type of veggies to purchase and quantities. Substitutions to the list are encouraged, particularly to take advantage of seasonally veggies that are available when the Family Night event is being held. Also, please check with school administrators to find out if there are any allergies that you need to consider when buying ingredients.

### *Pizza Ingredients*

- 25 whole wheat pitas + 2-3 for blessing before the meal
- 4 pounds mozzarella cheese (slightly more than 1 oz/ pita)
- 2 tablespoon dried basil
- 2 tablespoon dried oregano
- 1 tablespoon garlic powder (if desired)
- 1 tablespoon ground black pepper
- 6 (15-ounce) cans tomato sauce
- 2 (4-ounce) cans tomato paste
- 2 8-ounce packages of white button mushrooms
- 3 peppers, red, yellow, and/or green
- 1 jar of sun-dried tomatoes
- 1 onion
- 1 can black olives

### *Salad Ingredients*

- 2 heads Red leaf lettuce
- 1 bag of carrots
- 5 tomatoes or 2 pints cherry tomatoes
- 2 cucumbers
- 1 bag celery
- Sprouts

### *Orange Spritzer Ingredients*

- 5-6 pint bottles of Seltzer
- 2-3 ½ gallons of orange juice

### *Teaching Component Materials*

- To Till and To Tend worksheet (pg 90)
- Large chart paper
- Five signs: Totally Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, Totally Disagree
- Markers
- Benchers

### Set up

#### *Table One: Making the Sauce & Preparing the Cheese (4-6 people)*

- Equipment & Food:
- 4 pounds mozzarella cheese (slightly more than 1 oz/ pita)
- 2 tablespoon dried basil
- 2 tablespoon dried oregano
- 1 tablespoon garlic powder (if desired)
- 1 tablespoon ground black pepper
- 6 (15-ounce) cans tomato sauce
- 2 (4-ounce) cans tomato paste
- 1 can opener
- Measuring spoons
- 2-3 cheese graters
- 2-3 Cutting boards
- 2 large bowls
- 1 large spoon
- Pita Pizza Recipe (pg 87)

#### *Table Two: Prepping the Pizza toppings (8-10 people)*

##### Equipment & Food

- 2 8-ounce packages of white button mushrooms
- 3 peppers, red, yellow, and/or green
- 1 jar of sun-dried tomatoes
- 1 onion
- 2 cans black olives
- 5 bowls
- 1 scrap bowl
- 8-10 knives
- 8-10 cutting boards
- Pita Pizza Recipe (pg 87)

#### *Table Three: Prepping the Salad (8-10 people)*

### *Table Decorations Materials*

- Table cloths or place mats
- Markers
- Construction paper
- Other room or table decorations
- Masking tape

### Equipment & Food:

- 2 heads Red leaf lettuce
- 1 bag of carrots
- 5 tomatoes or 2 pints cherry tomatoes
- 2 cucumbers
- 1 bag celery
- 1 large bowl (for lettuce)
- 4 bowls
- 1 scrap bowl
- 8-10 knives
- 8-10 cutting boards
- Salad Recipe (pg 88)

#### *Table Four: Prepping the Pita (2-4 people)*

##### Equipment & Food:

- Pita
- Baking sheets
- Pita Pizza Recipe (pg 87)

#### *Table Five: Make the Orange Spritzers (1-2 people)*

##### Equipment & Food:

- Orange juice
- Seltzer
- Pitcher
- Spritzer Recipe (pg 89)

#### *Table Six: Decoration Table*

##### Materials:

- Table cloths or place mats to decorate
- Markers
- Construction paper
- Other room or table decorations
- Masking tape

## I. Cooking Component: Make-Your-Own Pizza & Make-Your-Own Salads

### a) Pizza Prep & Transform the Cooking Space to Dining Space (30 minutes)

As students and parents arrive, assign them to a pizza prep table. Remind the parents and students to first wash their hands. As tables finish their tasks, they should clean up their work area and then make their table decorations. Once work areas are clean, the decorations should be used to transform the cooking space into an eating space.

### b) Preparing to Eat (5 minutes)

Before saying the blessing before the meal, it is a good time to talk both about the eating atmosphere and the role of *brachot*. It is appropriate for either the lead coordinator or another member of the community who is comfortable in a front-of-house role to facilitate this portion of the evening.

#### Enjoying Eating Together

Many of the foods will be familiar and enjoyed by many of the participants; however, some of the foods will be new to some of the participants. Some participants will love a food that others don't like.

Encourage everyone to at least try everything. It takes about 10 times of eating a new food for anyone (young or old) to really learn to like it!

To create an environment that makes it easy for everyone to enjoy their food “*do not yuck my yum!*” Ask for someone to explain what they think this means. When you say “yuck” to a food, the person next to you who is enjoying the same food might not like it as much. It is the same idea as, “if you have nothing nice to say, don't say anything at all.”

#### Blessing Before the Meal

Another part of preparing to eat together is the saying of a *bracha*. Blessings give us a way to transform something that is daily and routine, like eating, into a holy action. Tonight was different for many of us because this community came together to transform dinner into a special event. Ask 3-4 people to share what they are thankful for in connection to the evening and/or the food everyone is about to eat.

Together say the following blessing:

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם הַמּוֹצֵיא לֶחֶם מִן הָאָרֶץ.

*Baruch atah adonai elobaynu melech ba'olam hamotzi lechem min ha'aretz.*

Blessed are You, eternal God, who brings forth bread from the earth.

Small pieces of pita bread should be available for everyone to eat.

### c) First Course (10 minutes)

As the pizzas cook, everyone can make their own salads from the salad bar and sit down to enjoy the first course.

### d) Second Course (10 minutes)

Pizza time! Eat and enjoy!

### e) Benching (5 minutes)

When the meal is complete, either the coordinator or another appropriate member of the community should say the *Birkat Hamazon*/Blessing after a meal. While this practice will be familiar to some and new to others, it is beneficial for everyone to frame the context of the blessing.

After the meal is it Jewish tradition and practice to say a blessing. This is based on text in Deuteronomy 8:10 which says

דברים פרק ח פסוק י  
וְאָכַלְתָּ וּשְׂבַעְתָּ וּבֵרַכְתָּ אֶת ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ עַל הָאָרֶץ הַטֹּבָה אֲשֶׁר נָתַן לְךָ:

When you have eaten your fill, give thanks to the LORD your God for the good land which He has given you.

f) Transform the Dining Space to Learning Space/ Clean up (10 minutes)

Everyone should clean up his or her individual tables. (Clean up can also happen as people finish eating and before benching.) Encourage the students to take charge of clean-up. Everyone should wash 1-2 bowls and other serving pieces. Clean-up can become a fun game as students are selected to wash the largest or messiest bowl. This will make it easier to get everyone to pitch in.

## II Family Learning Component: To Till and To Tend

a) Introduction (5 minutes)

The facilitator for the event will introduce the second half of the evening, which will include different activities based on the Genesis 2:15 text, to till and to tend. The first activity will be done in small groups, encourage people to have students and parents from different families sit together. There should be 4-6 people in each group.

b) To Till and To Tend text discussion (10 minutes)

Read the text and use the questions to guide the groups' discussion.

NOTE: Pass out worksheet (page 90)

בראשית ב:טו  
וַיִּקַּח ה' אֱלֹהֵי הַיָּמִים אֶת הָאָדָם וַיְנַחֲהוּ בְּגֵן עֵדֶן לְעֹבְדָהּ וּלְשִׁמְרָהּ:

The LORD God took the man and placed him in the garden of Eden, to till it and tend it.

Genesis 2:15

What does it mean to “tend” (lishmora/לְשִׁמְרָהּ) to something? How is this similar or different to “owning” it?

The passage can also be translated that man was in the garden to “work it (l’ovdah/לְעֹבְדָהּ) and keep it.” What does it mean to “work” in the land, in contrast to “serving” it?

How are l’ovdah/לְעֹבְדָהּ and lishmora/לְשִׁמְרָהּ similar and how are these two ideas different?

c) Agree-Disagree Continuum Activity (15 minutes)

The facilitator will draw everyone back together. In order to continue to reflect on this passage, there is an Agree-Disagree Continuum set up. Along one wall are five signs:

Totally Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, Totally Disagree

The facilitator will read a statement and everyone needs to move in front of the sign that represents what they think about the statement. After the statement is read, the facilitator will ask a 1-2 people from each point along the continuum to share their point of views.

Statement 1: Human beings own the earth.

Statement 2: L'ovdah/ לְעִבְדָּהּ and lishmora/ לְשִׁמְרָהּ are the same thing.

Statement 3: Earth is a gift that is meant for the benefit of us all.

Statement 4: It is not possible for human to both use the land and preserve the land.

d) Agree-Disagree Continuum Activity Reflection (5 minutes)

Ask participants to spend a few minutes sharing what they learned during the activity.

What did you learn during the last activity? What surprised you about making a choice along the continuum?  
What surprised you about someone else's choice?

e) Family Check-In (10 minutes)

All participants will find their family members and sit together. There is about 10 minutes for the family to think about the experience cooking and learning as a group.

What did you like about cooking together? What was hard?

What did you find interesting during the learning?

What is one thing you might do differently in your home based on your experiences? Or what is one thing you want to make sure you continue to do together?

f) Closing (10 minutes)

Thank the people who helped to make the event possible. Thank the parents and students for coming and participating all evening. Distribute the feedback form to all participants and ask them to please take a few minutes to complete the form. Announce future events. Encourage everyone to continue the conversations as they get home, over the dinner table, after school, etc. Collect the feedback form from participants.

***Min Ha'Aretz in the Classroom: Lesson 2 & 3***

Lesson 2: Earth and Lesson 3: Growing Environment are appropriate to be taught in conjunction with this program. In Lesson 2, students explore that throughout Jewish tradition there is a strong connection between Jewish people and the land. Students reflect on what makes land “good” and are introduced to the concept of sustainability. In Lesson 3, students further examine the connection between the conditions of a place to the food that it produces. Students discuss what it means to be *shomri adamah* (guardians of the earth) and consider how they want to sow and reap their own “seeds”.

**If you only have 45 minutes...**

Here is the outline of the sections you should use for a shorter version of the Family Cooking and Learning program.

II. Complete the second section of the program but do not include section e).

## Pita Pizza Recipe

1. Wash your hands with soap and warm water!
2. Preheat oven to 425 degrees F (220 degrees C)
3. Warm pitas in the preheated oven or in a microwave for 1 minute, or until soft.
4. Open the tomato sauce and tomato paste cans, empty into a large bowl
5. Measure out 1 tablespoon dried basil into sauce
6. Measure out 1 tablespoon dried oregano into sauce
7. Measure out ½ tablespoon garlic powder (if desired) into sauce
8. Measure out ½ tablespoon ground black pepper into sauce
9. Stir sauce & set aside
10. Grate cheese
11. With a damp towel, wipe the mushrooms clean. Cut off the stems and slice mushrooms. Place in bowl.
12. Wash the peppers. Slice in half. Remove stem and inside white “ribs.” Cut the peppers into bite size pieces. Place in bowl.
13. Open jar of sun-dried tomatoes, drain, and arrange in bowl.
14. Peel the onion. Cut off the root and stem ends. Cut the onion in half. Cut slices. Place in bowl.
15. Open the cans of black olives. Slice olives. Place in bowl.
16. Set up “Make Your Own Pita Pizza” buffet. First, the pita, sauce, cheese, toppings.
17. Scoop about ¼ cup of sauce onto your pita and lightly spread it.
18. Scoop about ½ cup of mozzarella cheese onto your pita and lightly spread it.
19. Sprinkle 2-3 veggie toppings.
20. Cover baking sheet with aluminum foil.
21. Place the pitas on a large baking sheet and write each person’s name in pen next to their pizza. Place pizza in the preheated oven for about 8 minutes, or until the pita bread has reached desired crispness.
22. Serve whole, or cut into slices.



## **Salad Recipe**

1. Wash your hands with soap and warm water!
2. Wash the lettuce. Remove the core. Tear leaves into bite size pieces. Place in large bowl.
3. Wash the carrots. Cut off the very bottoms and tops. Cut into circles. Place in a bowl.  
Note: Peeling is not necessary if you clean them well. Most of the nutrients are right under the skin and peeling them removes them.
4. Wash the tomatoes. Remove the stem. Slice. Place in bowl.
5. Wash the cucumbers. Cut off the very bottoms and tops. Cut the cucumber in half, the long way. Cut into half circles. Place in a bowl.
6. Wash the celery. Cut off the tops and bottoms. Cut into small pieces. Place in a bowl.
7. Set up the “Make Your Own Salad station” Remember to include the sprouts!
8. Allow everyone to take as much or as little of an item as they like.

### **Spritzer Recipe**

1. Wash your hands with soap and warm water!
2. Pour equal parts of orange juice and seltzer into a large pitcher.
3. Stir and enjoy!

## To Till and To Tend Think-sheet

בראשית ב:טו

וַיִּקַּח ה' אֱלֹהִים אֶת הָאָדָם וַיִּנְחֵהוּ בְּגֵן עֵדֶן לְעֲבֹדָהּ וּלְשִׁמְרָהּ:

The LORD God took the man and placed him in the garden of Eden, to till it and tend it.  
Genesis 2:15

① Over the course of a week, students sprouted in class. What tasks were involved in caring for the sprouts? What would happen if we hadn't done it?

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② How did it feel to “guard” or “keep” the sprouts? What does it mean to keep something for someone, in contrast to “owning” it?

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③ What is lishmora/לְשִׁמְרָה?

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④ What does it mean to work in the land, in contrast to serving it?

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⑤ What is l'ovdah/לְעֲבֹדָה ?

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## Food and Community Learning Lab #6

### The Big Jewish Idea

The culminating learning lab, Food and Community, has two primary goals.

- The first is to introduce the Big Jewish Idea of shared meals as a means of building community and as a way to remember the importance and invaluable role that community plays in all of our lives. The community meal – whether a potluck at the conclusion of this program, a synagogue Shabbat dinner, a large Passover seder, etc – embodies the ideals of sharing and cooperation as way to bring a community together.
- The final program also serves as a wrap-up for **Home for Dinner** and ties everything together, as well as serving as opportunity for families to evaluate their experiences as part of **Home for Dinner**.

This Main Course of this program is built around two stories, *Potato Latkes All Around*, a version of this story you might know by the name of *Stone Soup*, and *Capturing the Moon*, a famous Chelm story as told by Eddie Feinstein in his story collection of the same name. These stories reinforce the idea of sharing food as a way of building community and connections between people. It is designed as a combination of family story time and family story theater.

### Advance Preparation

#### Prepare the Families

- Set the date in advance and let your families know! Use email or the **Home for Dinner** flyer to get the word out and to remind parents.
- Remind each family to bring a can of food for the food bank or pantry.
- Potluck! Each family would bring a favorite dish or traditional family dish and a copy of their recipe (if they are willing to share!) Collect the recipes during the program and you can put together a recipe book as a memento for all the families.
  - Review the Guide to a Family Meals Potluck Dinner from Learning Lab #4 (pg 56-57) in order to organize the Potluck.

#### Materials

##### *For Hors D'oeuvres:*

- Select and set up the Hors D'oeuvres activities, including a healthy snack and name tags

##### *For Appetizers*

- Large post-it notes (ideally 5x8 inches)
- Pens or pencils for each participant
- Large sheet of butcher paper on the wall

##### *For Main Course:*

- Print one copy of *Potato Pancakes All Around* for each family (pg 96-97)
- Print out *Potato Pancakes All Around* - Ingredient Cards – print out and cut enough so that each family receives at least one (pg 98-102)
- Print and cut Ingredient Mix-Up game cards (pg 103-106)
- Print one copy of *Capturing the Moon* (pg 107-108) for each family
- Print *Capturing the Moon* thought questions (print on a half-sheet of colored paper; enough for each family to have two) (pg 109)

## I Hors D'oeuvres

Select 3 to 5 Hors D'oeuvres stations depending on how many people you expect to attend the learning lab. At each learning lab, make sure to include healthy snacks and name tags. See pages 10-13 for stations.

For the culminating learning lab, there are special “graffiti walls” to use during the Hors D'oeuvres portion of the evening. On page 11 there are 7 suggested “graffiti walls” specifically for the final learning lab. You can use all 7 or select the ones you want to use based on the number of people you are expecting to attend.

Allow time for everyone to take a marker and circulate, writing on each wall, answering each question.

## II Appetizers

### a) Baruch Haba – Welcoming Circle (5 minutes)

As you welcome the families – parents, grandparents, other guardians, and the students – provide an overview of the day’s learning lab and a short reflection on the program as a whole.

### b) Singing (2 minutes)

If singing has become part of your **Home for Dinner** tradition, continue the tradition with a short song or niggun.

### c) Graffiti Walls Continued (15 minutes)

Ask people to gather in groups beside each poster (choose a number that more or less evenly distributes the group, encourage mixed kids-parents groups). Ask them to discuss the topic on the wall for 2-3 minutes and then rotate around the room. Ring a bell or blow a whistle as a signal to move. It’s not necessary for every group to rotate to every wall. Fit the number of rotations to the amount of time you have.

Then give each person a large post-it note and ask them to write one thing about **Home for Dinner** that is important to them to remember.

Invite everyone to post their notes on the large blank sheet of butcher paper on the wall. If time permits, before posting, people can share theirs aloud in a whip. Otherwise just post them now and either encourage people to read them during the potluck or include a whip in your closing circle where people can read what they wrote. Be sure to collect them so you can include them in your evaluation.

## III Main Course – Part I

Ask families to sit together. Keep an area clear to use as a stage. Situate yourself and your props on stage.

### a) Potato Latkes All Around (10 minutes)

Before you start reading, give one person in each family (or in the group) a Potato Latke Ingredient Card. (You can distribute duplicates.) You might chose to have one person tell the story while the parents and students mime (use some props to add visual cues).

Before you (or a designated storyteller or reader) tells the story, explain that as you read an ingredient in the story, the person holding that ingredient should come up and offers it to you. The storyteller will then toss it in the mixing bowl and the person who handed in the ingredient should take a seat on the stage.

Read and enjoy the story

At the end of the story, ask everyone who brought an ingredient up to hold hands and make a long line across the stage.

Ask the audience to count how many people helped to make the latkes.

Ask, “How would the latkes have been made if I didn’t have help?”

What if I didn’t have X...what if I didn’t have Y... (go through the whole list)

Ask, “What if people didn’t want to share?”

Ask, “What if I had no friends to call on?”

Ask, “What do you think the author might have been trying to teach us?” Take as many suggestions as are offered.

Summarize: “The community was able to together create something that each person alone was unable to do. It wasn’t done with grand gestures or from a leader, but from each person participating.”

Ask all your “ingredients” to take a bow!

#### b) Ingredient Mix-Up Game (10 minutes)

Distribute the rest of the Ingredient Mix Up Cards so that everyone in the room is holding one.

When everyone has a card, ask people to get up, mill around and try to form groups of 4-5 (no bigger) with cards that match – either items that can be cooked together or cooked items that could come together to make a delicious meal.

Mix Up Card matches (these are suggestions, families can come up with their own):

- Sugar, flour, eggs, chocolate chips, water = chocolate chip cookies
- Garbanzo beans (chickpeas), tehini, pita, parsley, lettuce = falafel
- Chicken stock, matzah meal, eggs, kosher salt = matzah ball soup
- Flour, eggs, salt, yeast, poppy seeds = challah
- Lettuce, tomatoes, carrots, cucumber, avocado = salad
- Apples, walnuts, red wine, cinnamon = charoset

Have your staff available to help people find suitable matches.

Allow about 5 minutes for everyone to scramble around to find a group-match.

When it seems most people have found a matching group, get quiet and have people “introduce” their creations. Each person in the group should say what ingredient they are: Hi, I’m garbanzo beans; I’m tehina; I’m pita; I’m parsley, I’m lettuce. Then, as a group, they can announce what they become together – falafel!

Bring the game to a close by reiterating the lesson of Potato Latkes All Around -- when we work together we have fun, we have better food, and we feel more connected from the process of working and eating together.

c) Capturing the Moon (20 minutes)

Ask families to sit together. Distribute copies of the story so that each family has one. They should read the story together, taking turns with the reading if they wish.

As each family finishes reading, give them the Thought Questions handout for discussion questions.

When it seems that most families are wrapping up, call the group together.

Ask wrap-up questions:

“Why do you think sharing soup helped the people cheer up on dark nights?”

Possible answers include: soup is warm whereas some dark nights might be cold; people are sharing which helps you feel not so lonely; friends are good company; sharing a meal makes it kind of like a party.

“What does this story have in common with Potato Latkes All Around?”

#### **IV Main Course - Part II Potluck**

If this learning lab was planned to include a potluck, before you start to eat, point out that your group of families is doing just what is recommended in both stories: Sharing food and building community.

At the end of the meal, include *Birkat HaMazon*, the traditional prayer after eating. If the students are able to lead, encourage them to do so.

#### **V Dessert**

a) Closing whips (10 minutes)

Depending on the amount of time left, ask people to respond to one or more of the following prompts:

One thing I ate tonight that I liked (that my family did not bring)...

I appreciate...

Share what you wrote on the post-it note from the graffiti wall.

Be sure to collect the recipes that family members brought if you plan to create a **Home for Dinner** Cookbook.

Closing song (either repeat from the opening song or another familiar song)

b) Closing Thank Yous & Reminders (2 min)

As the final **Home for Dinner** learning lab, take a few moments to thank people who helped make this program possible, include teachers, administrative staff, the rabbi, and parents. Anyone who was part of the community supporting the program should be thanked – and finally, a final round of applause of all the students and parents and all the meals they did make and will make in the future!

## ***Min Ha'Aretz* in the Classroom**

While there is not a specific *Min Ha'Aretz* lesson to teach in conjunction with this Lab, it is appropriate to include a class period to tie together the classroom learning portion of **Home for Dinner**. Lesson 18 asks students to re-examine the relationship between food and Jewish tradition. After the classroom and family learning labs, we hope that your students are able to demonstrate - in written word, drawings, photos or recipes - a deeper and more nuanced understanding of this relationship.

### **If you only have 45 minutes...**

Here is the outline of the sections you should use for a shorter version of the Food & Community learning lab. We have noted suggested revisions to fit the shorter time frame.

I. Hors D'oeuvres - (10 minutes)

II. Appetizers a) and c) - revised - welcome the families and then give each person a large post-it note. Ask them to walk around the room reading the graffiti walls and to then write down their answer to the question - what is important to remember about **Home for Dinner**? Invite everyone to post their notes on the large blank sheet of butcher paper on the wall. (10 minutes)

III. Main Course - Part 1 - revised - select either a) and b) or c) (20 minutes)

IV. Dessert - revised - conduct a closing whip and closing thank yous and reminders (5 minutes)



## Potato Pancakes All Around

A Hanukkah Tale by Marilyn Hirsh

On a cold winter afternoon, Samuel the peddler walked down the road to a village. He passed children sliding, and sledding, and skating.

“The children are out of school early,” he said to himself, “because tonight is the first night of Hanukkah.”

When Samuel reached the village, it was almost dark. He knocked on the door of a house. Mama opened the door and smiled at the peddler.

“A guest is always welcome,” she said. “Come in. We are just lighting the first candle.”

So they all sang the blessings together.

The two grandmothers went to the stove.

“Aha,” thought Samuel, “now they’ll start making potato pancakes.”

“We’ll use my recipe,” Grandma Yetta said firmly.

“No mine is better!” answered Grandma Sophie.

“Who needs recipes?” said Samuel the Peddler. “I’ll show you how to make potato pancakes from a crust of bread!”

“Some say for potato pancakes a pickle, a fish, or a cabbage is good,” Samuel continued, “but I say a crust of bread is best.”

“Ridiculous,” said Grandma Yetta.

“That’s crazy,” said Grandma Sophie.

“We’re hungry!” cried the twins.

“So let’s try the peddler’s idea,” said Mama.

Samuel took a bowl from his sack.

“Who wants to hold it?” he asked.

“We do!” yelled the twins.

Samuel carefully grated a crust of bread into the bowl.

“It looks delicious,” he announced. “But it needs a little water.”

The grandmothers wouldn’t even look.

The peddler tasted the batter.

“Some would say it needs salt... a little pepper, perhaps?”

“Even I know it needs salt and pepper,” said Papa.

“Well, if you insist, I wouldn’t say no,” replied the peddler. And he added salt and pepper.

Samuel noticed a chicken looking in the window.

“I think this chicken is trying to tell me something. But what could a chicken say?”

“I know!” cried Rachel. “The chicken is telling you to add eggs.”

“I have heard of that,” agreed the peddler. And he added six eggs.

“He takes advice from chickens,” said Grandma Yetta.

“Do *you* have any suggestions?” he asked her politely.

“May you grow like an onion with your head in the ground!” she shouted.

“Ah, onions! A good idea,” said Samuel. So David hurried to chop some onions.

Samuel smiled. “Any minute now, we’ll have potato pancakes.”

“But what about the potatoes?” asked Sarah. “I grated all these potatoes, all by myself.”

“It’s not in my recipe,” said Samuel, “but it’s a sin to waste food. So what can it hurt? I’ll add your potatoes.” And he did.

“What will you fry the potato pancakes in?” asked Grandma Yetta and Grandma Sophie at the same time.

“In a frying pan,” answered Samuel. And he took one from his sack.

“Chicken fat is best,” insisted Grandma Yetta.

“You may be right,” said Samuel.

“Goose fat is better,” declared Grandma Sophie.

“I wouldn’t say no,” Samuel replied.

So Samuel took a big spoonful of chicken fat, and a big spoonful of goose fat, and began to fry the pancakes. Delicious smells filled the house.

Samuel kept on frying. More and more potato pancakes piled up. Finally, it was time to eat.

So they ate, and ate, and ate potato pancakes all around. Even Grandma Yetta and Grandma Sophie agreed that the potato pancakes were the best ever.

And they danced. And they sang. And they played games until very late. Grandma Yetta and Grandma Sophie gave the children pennies. Then everyone went to sleep.

The next morning, the family begged Samuel to stay for the whole eight days of Hanukkah.

“Thank you,” said Samuel, “but a peddler must move along. I know you’ll have a happy Hanukkah... now that you can make potato pancakes from a crust of bread.”

## Eating Alone and Together

*Supplemental activity invented by Amy Kassiola at Congregation Rodef Sholom in Marin, CA*

Tables are set with cups of popcorn and tangerines. Under a cover of towel or paper: 1 avocado, 1 lemon, a fork, a knife, some salt and pepper, a small dish of salsa, an empty bowl and a bowl of chips.

Gather the group.

- Everyone takes a cup of popcorn and is asked to spread out around the social hall (meeting room, etc) and take 5 minutes to eat it by themselves, in silence.

Everyone walks quietly, finds a space and sits alone for 5 minutes, eating

- Ring a bell to signal the end of the popcorn/quiet time. Ask everyone to find a partner. Each pair shares a tangerine together.
- When they have eaten their tangerine(s) they are asked to group around tables of 8-10 and uncover the items that have remained covered. Now, they are asked use those items and work together to make guacamole for their table to enjoy together.

When the guacamole and chips have been consumed, each participant to answer these 3 questions: (Recommended: writing first then talking around the table.)

- 1) When I ate my popcorn alone, I was thinking/ feeling \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) Sharing the tangerine with someone else was \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) Three ways that the guacamole experience was different from eating the popcorn and the tangerine:
  - A. \_\_\_\_\_
  - B. \_\_\_\_\_
  - C. \_\_\_\_\_

In Amy's version, the kids went out for a brief recess and parents remained to shmooze a bit. During this time, the two teachers went through the written slips of paper with the questions and answers, and selected some to read aloud when everyone reconvened. They made a selection and ordered them so there was a variety (serious, funny and critical) and read them aloud to the whole group before moving on to the next activity.

# Crust of Bread



Flickr User: Jarkolaine

# Water



Flickr User: Anna L Conti

# Salt



Flickr User: aaronjlouie

# Pepper



Flickr User: MarxFoods.com

# Eggs



Flickr User: pietroizzo

# Onions



Flickr User: prettywar-stl



# Potatoes



Flickr User: SliceOfChic

# Frying Pan



Flickr User: grongar

# Chicken Fat



Flickr User: saralafas

# Goose Fat



Flickr User: IanL



**Sugar**



**Flour**



**Eggs**



**Chocolate Chips**



**Water**



**Garbanzo Beans  
(Chickpeas)**



**Chicken Stock**



**Matzah Meal**



**Eggs**



**Kosher Salt**



**Flour**



**Eggs**



**Salt**



**Yeast**



**Poppy Seeds**



**Lettuce**



**Tomatoes**



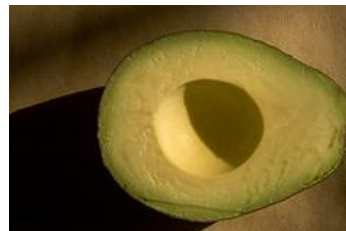
**Carrots**



**Cucumber**



**Avocado**



**Apples**



**Walnuts**



**Red Wine**



**Cinnamon**



## Capturing the Moon

From *Capturing the Moon: Classic and Modern Jewish Tales* by Edward Feinstein, Behrman House, 2008

*The town of Chelm is the legendary home of the world's wisest fools or the world's most foolish wise people—no one is really sure which. They have a special way of solving problems in Chelm. If only the rest of the world were as wise as Chelm.*

Of all things the people of Chelm loved, they loved the moon most of all. When it shone brightly in the night sky, there was joy and celebration in the town. Everything in the town was brighter: Homes would glow with happiness; lovers would walk through the town slowly, staring into each other's eyes; children would listen to their parents and their teachers; the old, the young, even dogs and cats were kind and considerate to one another. But when the moon waned and disappeared, a gloomy sadness settled over everyone.

"We have to do something about this!" proclaimed the town leaders. "We have to find a way to stay joyful even on the dark nights. But how?"

"If only we could capture the moon!" one Chelm genius declared. "Then we could let out a little light on those dark, gloomy nights and bring happiness to the world!"

"But how do you capture the moon?" the townspeople wondered.

"Well," offered Shmerel the tailor, "once I was eating a bowl of soup. And as I ate, I looked into the bowl. And in the bowl was the light of the moon. If we had a big enough bowl of soup, perhaps we could capture the moon"

And so it was determined: They would build the world's biggest bowl, fill it with soup, and capture the moon!

In the town square a giant bowl was constructed. And one night as the moon shone brightly in the sky, the whole town came forth with soup—jars of soup, pots of soup, vats of soup, bathtubs full of soup. Soon they had filled the world's largest bowl. As the bowl filled up, the moon's brilliant light was reflected in it.

"There it is!" they shouted.

Stealthily they snuck up on the moon. Then, all at once, they slammed the top on the bowl. At that very moment a cloud covered the sky, blotting out the moon's light.

"We own the moon!" they shouted. "It is right here in the world's biggest bowl of soup. We own the moon!"

That night there was dancing and rejoicing all night long in the town of Chelm. But the next night, as the sun went down and darkness covered the land, the moon rose again, bright as ever, shining high in the sky.

Everyone in Chelm was perplexed. "How can the moon be in the sky? We captured it right here in the town square, in the world's biggest bowl of soup!"

"Someone must have let it out!" shouted Shoshanah the matchmaker.

"But who? Who would do such a terrible thing?" asked Avrum the butcher.

And so an investigation was launched. Everyone in the town was interrogated. Each person was required to account for his or her whereabouts all during the day. No one was spared. No one except, of course, the rabbi. No one suspected that the rabbi, beloved, wise, and learned, would ... No—it couldn't be, not the rabbi!

But the investigation came up empty. Everyone had an alibi. Everyone was in school, at work, in the fields, in the shops, at home—everyone but the rabbi.

And so the townspeople of Chelm timidly approached their beloved rabbi.

"Learned Rabbi, did you let the moon out of the soup?" the designated spokesperson inquired .

"Yes," he sighed. "It was I."

A shock ran through the town.

"But why, dear Rabbi, why?" they persisted.

"Why?" He looked at them through his bushy white eyebrows and stroked his long white beard. "Why? Because there are things we enjoy while we have them. They are ours to own and to hold and to enjoy"

"Like a shirt," someone offered, "or a shoe"

"And there are other things," the rabbi continued, "things of far greater value, that we enjoy only when we share them. Do you know what things I mean?"

"Love?" someone suggested.

"Yes, love," he answered.

"And hugs!" someone else offered.

"Yes, hugs," he answered.

"And joy!" they shouted.

"Yes, joy," he responded.

"And the moon!" said Shmerel the tailor sadly.

"Yes, the moon as well," the rabbi responded. "Only when we share it can we really enjoy its light. And so I was the one who let the moon out. And now all the world can share it! "

"But what will we do now, on dark nights, when the moon disappears? We'll be sad and gloomy and dark," the people cried.

"That's true," responded the rabbi. "Into every life come times of sadness, darkness, and gloom. That's part of life. We'll just have to find something else to share that sustains us when that happens!"

"Like what?" they asked.

"Like soup!" declared the rabbi. "We'll share soup. If you can't own the moon and share happiness all the time, the next best thing is to share soup."

And so it was declared a tradition. On nights when the moon disappeared and the night sky grew dark and gloomy, everyone shared soup. And it helped. For soup may not bring happiness—but it helps.

### **Capturing the Moon – Discussion Questions**

Was the rabbi right to convince the people that he had released the moon? Yes or no?  
Why do you think he decided to do that?

Why did the people want to capture the moon in the first place? What did the full moon do for them that they missed when it was not visible?

Do you think most people like the light better than the dark? Do you?

How does the dark feel?

What do you like to do when it's dark?

Would it help you to share soup (or something else you like to eat) with people you like?

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