



Pesach Ideas for Hebrew School Programs

Introduction

In preparation for Pesach, the Shluchim Office Hebrew Network has compiled some ideas that you can use in your Hebrew School Programs. These ideas are culled from the Shluchim Office Resource Library, The Rebbe Speaks to Children, sichosinenglish.com, chabad.org, askmoses.com, A Taste of Nostalgia (Dr. Twerski), searches online, e-chinuch.org, Shluchos Conference Call, and others.

We include some things to think about when designing your program, and some ideas that you can integrate into your existing program. We have included several lessons (and many sub lessons) to be learned from the concepts related to Pesach. We provide sample activities.

This is in no way a complete list, and not every idea will work well in your classrooms. In order to have a more comprehensive list, please share the activities, songs, crafts, etc. that you use in your programs as your children and their families learn about Pesach.

About this document

There is so much we want the children (and their families) to learn about Pesach. The story, how to conduct a seder, about chametz/ matzah, the 4 questions, etc. and the messages from Pesach, and much more.

So, we looked to Pesach itself to guide us about what we want the children to learn. We looked at the names of Pesach for inspiration, and then to the concepts learn from the names and then filled in with other rituals and traditions from Pesach. We have compiled many interesting and inspiring anecdotes to guide the designing of the lessons. We provide much of that research here.

Links Throughout the document, you will find several links. It is worthwhile that you open them, as they include many interesting points or ideas.

Some ideas used in some schools:

One theme for the entire school. The entire school, and even the rest of the Chabad House focuses on one theme of Pesach. In this way, entire families have learned the same thing, and can have great discussions and develop new family traditions. The rabbi talks about this theme in his sermons, during the seder, in the pre-pesach adult classes, the preschool parents get a bit of it in their school newsletters, the Friendship Circle volunteers get it in their Pesach literature/ activities. (This makes it easier on the ones preparing all these materials – one theme, just change the presentation for the audience.)

Combine some classes. Divide the school into a few groups and teach the same things to a few age groups. For example, divide the school into K-2, 3-5, 6-7. And then prepare and teach just three different ways. It is important to write down which kids learned what so that next year, you can plan accordingly.

Each group has its own theme/lens for the year. Each group learns everything during the year through a lens. This provides a common thread and holds all the lessons together. Some examples are: Simcha – joy in being Jewish. Hashem – Hashem is involved in every aspect of our lives, our history, etc. Eretz Yisrael – How Eretz Yisrael is central to our lives. How they celebrate the holidays in Israel (bet Hamikdash and now)



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What to think about when designing your Pesach unit

There is so much to teach about Pesach and not enough time. It is important to really plan your Pesach unit.

- Identify what the children already know from previous years or previous lessons. Build on those.
 - We suggest that you yourself understand what Pesach means to you, and then understand what you want your particular group to know about Pesach – what content, what skills, and what messages you want each age group to learn. ■ Identify what would be important to the parents/ families of the children.
 - Choose topics and activities that are developmentally appropriate. ■ Ask yourself why you think those topics are important. ■ And only then develop a schoolwide plan to make sure that every group does learn what you had hoped. (Right after the lessons, the teachers should jot down what they actually did learn (not only what you had prepared for them). This will greatly help the staff when preparing for the next year.)
 - It is important that each teacher knows exactly which aspects of the story to focus on, which customs s/he should teach so that there is no overlap and that all concepts are covered over the student's time with your Hebrew School. Create a spiraling curriculum – each class should build on the knowledge from the previous year.
 - You do not have to teach everything to the children every year. You will have them in your Hebrew School for years.
 - Create an environment and design activities that enhance the Pesach message.
 - Create some interactive materials for the children to continue their learning with their families.
 - Create some programs to get the families involved in their children's and their own learning about Pesach. Perhaps the children can learn about the 10 plagues with their families. You provide some props or other materials, and the children can learn about the plagues at home.
 - Think about how you can piggyback two activities together. Perhaps you can have a model seder, and tell some of the messages of Pesach at the seder. Or you can ask some of the children to prepare the classroom seder table before they come to school. Give them some materials to read before.
 - Think about what you will teach in future years:
Pesach is so interconnected with Shavuot. When planning your Pesach unit, begin to think about how you will teach about Shavuot. Your Shavuot unit should follow the strategies/ concepts of your Pesach unit.
Pesach is also interconnected with Succot. When planning this year's Pesach unit, begin to think about how you will teach about Succot. Next year's Succot lesson should build on what the children have learned about Pesach (and Shavuot) this year.
 - When doing the crafts, it is very important that the children (and their parents) understand the connection between the craft and the spirit of the holiday of Pesach. Do not become so immersed in the craft that the connection is not exceedingly clear. Steer clear of crafts that are fun (or tasty) but do not enhance the messages of the holiday. Do not spend too much time on crafts unless you are using that time for informal discussion about the topic.
- Important:** It is suggested that you write down your Pesach objectives and choose activities that enhance that lesson, so that the message does not get lost in all the activities, and crafts.



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Some thoughts about Teaching Pesach

A thought for future years Teach the story of Pesach in more depth at some other point in the year and then simply review the highlights of the story before Pesach. In this way, you can focus on the mitzvot/ rituals and the messages of Pesach.

Another thought for the future When teaching Jewish History/ Parsha/ Torah Studies, plan it so that you begin with Beraishis right after Simchas Torah, and move along until the Pesach story right before Pesach and continue with the story so that you are up to Matan Torah before Shavuot. (If there is more time after Shavuot, continue with the building of the Mishkan, making Hashem a home down here.)

When telling the story of the Exodus, it is important that the children understand that **this story is in the Torah**. You should hold the Chumash as you tell the story, and refer to it throughout the discussion. Use primary sources – words from the Torah or from the Haggadah.

As this is our story – the story of the Jewish people – and because it is a mitzvah to feel as if we ourselves went out of Egypt, **teachers should use words like “we”** and not “they” – “We went out of Egypt... Hashem made miracles for *us*.”

An important theme of Pesach is passing on the story of our beginning – the exodus – to our children. This is done through the many unusual foods, actions and objects during the seder. Similarly, we should **pique the children’s curiosity so that they ask the questions**, and we help them understand.

When talking about the Bet Hamikdash, describe it as if we have it, as if it is so close... Talk about it in present tense.



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Teaching Holidays to Children

Overall ideas that can be incorporated in any lesson about Pesach.

Celebrating Every year – The Messages of the Holiday

We celebrated Pesach last year - why do we celebrate Pesach again this year? We celebrate every year, because every year, we can get new messages from Pesach for where we are this year. Throughout this past year, we have had new experiences and challenges, etc. We are different people than we were last year.

The lessons we learn from Pesach should be applied in every aspect of our lives. Every day should lead us to further spiritual and emotional growth and create new opportunities for spreading G-dliness in our homes and in the world.

When starting projects inspired by the holiday, it is important to document (on the public display, in literature, etc.) that this project was inspired by the messages of Purim.

Modeling

Involve the children in celebration of the holiday.

Talk about your own observances of the holiday.

Invite a guest to talk about his/ her observances.

Ask students to share what their families did on the holiday.

Invite students to a special holiday event hosted by school or synagogue

Invite students to your home to set up for the holiday.

Incorporate into future programs

Incorporate the topics learned about Pesach into future lessons. This will help the material crystallize in their minds. The children will also see the importance of the topic – it shows up in many conversations and topics.

MultiSensory

Kids learn through all senses. Build holiday memories for all senses.

Sights – Seder plate, items on plate, matzah, cups of wine, etc.

Sounds – songs, brachos

Taste – crunchy matzah, bitter herbs, parsley in salt water

Smells – matzah bakery, wine

Kinesthetic – re-enacting the Pesach story, dipping, cleaning for Pesach

Don't overstimulate

Focus on 1 or 2 parts of Pesach's message. It is important that the children know the basics of Pesach. Focus on one aspect of the story/ mitzvot and its related messages.

Bridging Home

Create ritual objects that can really be used in the home. Send these home with appropriate instructions and blessings.

Send home a sheet with background information about the holiday, along with celebration ideas and family discussion questions.

Provide families with links to holiday websites.



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Prior to a holiday, establish a hotline – a phone number that families can call with holiday preparation questions.

- **ACAJE: An Outline of the Seder for Children** The outline presented here is primarily for the purpose of indicating ways in which children can be incorporated into the ritual.
<http://www.ajaj.org/assets/pdf/parents/Otlnsdrchldrn.pdf>
- **ACAJE: Pesach Planner for Families.** Parents can jot down ideas to involve the children in preparing and celebrating Pesach.
<http://www.ajaj.org/assets/pdf/parents/PPlnerchldrn.pdf>

Kids Designed Holiday Guide for their parents

Using different medium, the children create a Pesach guide for their parents. The Guide should be written on an adult level, so that they can learn about the Holiday. The children's art should decorate the many pages of the Holiday Guide. The Art should also be accompanied by short captions for the parents to read to the children.

Guide – adult level
Children's art
Caption about Kid's art



Topic 1: Remember the Story of the Exodus

Every year at the Seder we repeat the story of the Exodus. And every year, we see the story differently; we discover a new detail, a new message to where we are now in our lives. This is



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similar to looking at a piece of art, or watching a movie. The first time you see it, you get the over all picture. But with each subsequent viewing, after you already know the overall picture or the plot, you see something else – a new detail, a new nuance. Open your eyes and heart to see these new messages. Turn the picture in a new angle, change the lighting, change the frame, put it in another room, focus on just one part. You can constantly see something new. If you let yourself!

Making sure that all remember the story

Since remembering the story is an integral part of our Judaism, we try to make sure that everyone has a chance to be part of a seder. Jews also all contribute to Maos Chitim, a special charity to help Jews with Passover expenses. At the seder itself, we start off by saying “Hei Lachma Anya” prayer and invite all Jews to our seder. At the seder table, there are the 4 sons who are all at different levels of Judaism. We also concern ourselves with a fifth son – the one that is not even at the seder. Therefore, Chabad makes seders all over the world. There are hundreds, if not thousands, of Chabad seders all over the world in far flung places like Nepal, Siberia, Japan, China, etc.

Sample Strategy: Create a collage of many aspects of the Pesach story, Pesach objects, Hebrew words, etc. so that it resembles an ‘I Spy’ picture, or a complex Michael Muchnik picture. The more complex, the better. Show it to the children. Give them 1-2 minutes to look at it. Tell them to write down what they see. Each kid will probably have a slightly different list. And that is the point, we each see different parts. Then each group of children should focus on different parts of the picture. And write down what else they have seen. Stress that we learn the story every year, because we see different details every year. *This is also a great way to see what they do know about Pesach.*

Sample Strategy: If most of the children know the story of Pesach, and you want to review for the new children, the teacher can narrate the story as if she is a reporter and then interview certain ‘witnesses’ about the event. The children are the witnesses. For example, “This just in ... I see masses of people crossing the sea. The sea just split for them. Wow! Let us go back to the beginning of this story. About 400 years ago, Hashem promised Abraham” *Go through that background as detailed as you feel appropriate.* Now to the more recent part of the story, the Jews were slaves to Pharaoh. Oh, I see a Hebrew here. How was it back in Egypt when you were slaves?” And go on from there. Other witnesses can tell of the plagues, of preparing the korban pesach, leaving Egypt, in the desert, by the sea, etc. You can video tape the entire ‘report’.

The children should only be witnesses from the Jewish perspective – as if they were really there. If you want to report something from the perspective of an Egyptian or other nationalities, report it as if this is something I just read or heard about. *The idea is that the children feel as if they are actually reliving the story.*

-The children can dress the part. Use a few props and costumes.

Sample Strategy: Take pictures of each child. Cut out just the head. Glue the face to a popsicle stick or tongue depressor. Have a picture of a child dressed as a slave with an Egypt background. Make the face in the picture blank or white. Make a slit in the picture so the kids can slip their own face into the picture and feel as if they were there. Have a few more pictures – of crossing the sea, by Matan Torah, etc. The kids can write their own captions under each picture. You can either bind them into a book or keep them as separate cards so the kids can do all sorts of activities with them – sequencing, etc. (See the article in the Binder about “Using Story-Picture Cards”)



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Sample Strategy: Combine with the model matzah bakery. Moses (the rabbi) tells them that G-d will take them out of Egypt. He rushes them to bake the matzah. And then they 'cross the sea' with the matzah on their backs.

Sample Strategy: Discuss the idea that we must feel as if we were there at the exodus, and that Pesach is symbolic for how we should live our lives – break free from our boundaries, rid ourselves of ego, etc. Reread the Haggada. Every time it says "Egypt" read "limitations." Replace the word "Pharaoh" with "Ego." And read it in the present tense: "We were slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt" = "We are slaves to our egos, stuck in our limitations." See handout ([end of this document](#)) Read more:

<http://www.chabad.org/holidays/passover/pesach.asp?AID=161002>

Sample Strategy: Time machine. On the holiday of Pesach, we must feel as if we actually went out of Egypt. Do something (silly) to make the kids feel as if we are going back in time. Set up the room as in a tent (fabrics from ceiling), rugs on the floor, etc. (Enlist the help of local teens or parents). The teacher/ parents can dress the part of ancient Hebrews and Moses.

And then re-enact the story of Pesach (with all the meforshim, especially the ones that have messages for contemporary life [get many details from the book Let My Nation Go], and sichos – for example: the teacher can say

- "That plague was so miraculous. It must have made the Egyptians realize that Hashem is the g-d who runs the world (from the words of the Torah – "in order that you know that I am G-d; Once again, I am sending all My plagues")
<http://www.chabad.org/holidays/passover/pesach.asp?AID=2759>
- "Did you hear about this new plague that G-d said He will bring. He's going to kill all the firstborns. That could include all Jewish firstborns too. In order for Jewish firstborns to be saved, we must show Hashem that we would do anything for Him. He says we should take a sheep ...(korban Pesach, doorpost, etc). and all Jewish men must have a bris. It is not enough that we have faith in Hashem in our hearts and souls, we must also *do* something to show Hashem that we have faith in Him – we must do His mitzvot. Let us take the sheep ... and then Hashem will *pass over* the Jewish homes. Doing the mitzvot builds our connection to Hashem, and brings the real redemption from Egypt. But, hey, a sheep, that's the Egyptian god. They'll kill us! Hey, I get it, Hashem wants us to show that we will do anything for Him, we're not scared of what others around us think!"
<http://www.chabad.org/holidays/passover/pesach.asp?AID=2759>
- "Hashem said that He will only take out the Hebrews who want to be part of His chosen nation. Not everyone will be taken out of Egypt. I know that there are some Hebrews { *remember to say Hebrews, and not Jews. Before they left Egypt, they were not yet the Jews* } who are content to stay in Egypt. Can't figure out why; didn't they see all the miraculous plagues? Don't they want to be connected to a g-d that does such wonderful miracles for His people? Maybe they aren't worthy of seeing that! I guess they have sunken too low in Egyptian culture that they can't see a life with Hashem as a more meaningful life. I wonder what will happen to them? Will they just stay in Egypt and sort of disappear from the Jewish people?"
<http://www.chabad.org/holidays/passover/pesach.asp?AID=2759>
- "Wo! After all those miracles that G-d did for us, my faith in Him has really grown. I realize that we are so deep in this Egyptian way of life. We live nothing like our



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illustrious ancestors, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. We have sunken so low. We must get out right now. We can't live like this any longer. Let's just go. No time to bake bread. We must get out right now!"

Pesach is also the time to live the future – the days of Mashiach, as we do during the Mashiach Seuda. On the same token, **take the kids into the future**. Describe the days of Mashiach. This can be done the first school day after Pesach, thus extending the concept of Pesach into the entire year. <http://www.chabad.org/holidays/passover/pesach.asp?AID=1720>



Pesach Topics ...

Topic 2: Festival of the Spring

Pesach must be in the Spring

Pesach is also called חג האביב. Pesach must always be in the spring. {This may be a opportunity to recall the unit about the Jewish calendar, but do not spend this precious time on the Jewish calendar}

(Pesach is in the month of Nissan – the first month.)

The origin (Etymology) of the word "Spring" is "the notion is of the "spring of the year," when plants "spring up". The plants 'spring up' at this time of the year.

From the time of creation, Nissan (spring) was designated as a time of renewal. Spring is a time of renewal, beginning, birth. The trees and flowers blossom, animals give birth to their young, etc. Throughout the world, feelings of renewal resonate. (Most of the 7 Minim are in bloom at this time of year).

This pattern extends into the human realm. Spring is a time of renaissance, when new life and vitality bloom. With relaxed, natural joy, we open ourselves to new experiences.

Pesach is chag ha'aviv, the festival of spring, a time when both individuals and our nation as a whole experience feelings of renewal. Indeed, this is implied by the very name Pesach, which means "jump," i.e., a leap forward to a new frame of reference. [At our Rebbe's Seder Table]

The spring is a time of renewal, and that is why our exodus and birth of our nation was in the spring.

Jewish holidays enable us to access the spirituality inherent in that particular time of the year.

"The historical manifestation of the energy of this time of the year was that the Jewish People's exodus and redemption from Egypt, their entry into the land of Israel in the time of Joshua and their return to Israel after the Purim story.

That energy is manifested in the Torah through the festival of Pesach. When we observe the festival in its appropriate time and fulfill its mitzvot, we are actually tapping into the spiritual energy beneath the surface of the physical world." (Gateway to Judaism)

Each year on the day of Passover the unique Divine energy is once again present and accessible. This energy is even more pronounced at the Seder. This was the exact time of redemption. So each year it is once again the time of redemption.

<http://www.chabad.org/holidays/passover/pesach.asp?AID=1780>

Pesach commemorates the Exodus from Egypt. But the Jewish holidays do more than commemorate history; they make history live. Whenever a holiday is celebrated, the same spiritual forces which brought about the holiday are again potently expressed and reflected in the private world of our souls. (We have the spiritual energy to break from our מצרים חסו – read as Mitzrayim (Egypt) or Metzaram (boundaries). It behooves us to tap into that spiritual energy.

But just because it is spring will not necessarily evoke such renewals. In order to evoke those feelings of renewal, we must create the best setting. We have certain mitzvot: ridding our home of chametz, eating matzah, telling the story of Pesach (the Seder)

<http://www.sichosinenglish.org/books/at-our-rebbes-seder-table/01.htm>



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Sample Strategy: Discuss what is the season of spring? Why is it called spring? What does spring mean? Then introduce the concept that Pesach is called Chag HaAviv, and that it must always fall out in the spring. As in everything in Judaism, where there are reasons for everything, there is a reason why Pesach must be in the spring. Draw a T chart comparing spring to the messages of Pesach.



Pesach Topics ...

Topic 3: Festival of the Matzahs

Matzah represents humility

"The particular mitzvot associated with a holiday are intrinsically linked to its basic theme. For example: Pesach enables us to undergo a personal exodus from Egypt by transcending our individual limits.[1] Accordingly, G-d gave us the mitzvah of eating matzah to help us internalize that experience. **For our food is assimilated into our bodies, becoming part of our flesh and blood.** Eating matzah thus converts the experience of self-transcendence into an integral part of our beings.

"The significance of matzah may be understood by comparing it to chametz (leaven). Chametz, which becomes bloated as it rises, symbolizes self-inflated egotism and pride. Matzah, which remains flat and unpretentious, reflects selfless humility. This concept is also reflected in the Torah's description of matzah as "poor man's bread"; [2] a poor man is humble and free of arrogance.

"Eating "poor man's bread" reduces our selfish tendencies. This finds expression in the Halachah. There is no question of chametz in matzah ashirah[3] (lit., "rich matzah," made of flour and liquids other than water; e.g., egg matzah); nevertheless, it cannot be used to fulfill the mitzvah of eating matzah.[4] Since it is not "poor man's bread," it fails to convey the same spiritual message as simple matzah." <http://www.sichosinenglish.org/books/timeless-patterns/34.htm>

"The flat, unpretentious **matzah represents the humility, self-effacement and commitment that are the ultimate liberators of the human spirit.** *Chametz* is spelled *chet, mem, tzadi*; *matzah* is spelled *mem, tzadi, hei*. So the only difference is the difference between the *chet* and the *hei* -- which, as the illustration above shows, is also slight. Both the *chet* and the *hei* have the form of a three sided enclosure, open at the bottom; the difference being that the *hei* has a small "escape hatch" near the top of its left side." For more: <http://www.chabad.org/holidays/passover/pesach.asp?AID=270881>

Which is heavier, a pound of bread or a pound of Matzah? **The pound of bread takes up more space, but it is merely the presence of air.** This is the person's ego.

What's the rush?

The Egyptians were more than happy to see the Jews go, so couldn't the Jews have taken a few more minutes to let the bread rise? The Jews weren't running from the Egyptians, they were running from the depth of ungodliness that they realized they had sunken to. They didn't want to delay. The Matzah, which they baked in such a hurry, is what the exodus is all about. The children of Israel had to make a hasty retreat from Egypt. Egypt and its lowliness had a hold on them, as powerful as an addiction. **They had to first get out of Egypt in order to get Egypt out of themselves.** To delay would be deadly. (If the redemption had not come when it did, it could not have come at all!) When we eat the matzah, we must realize that we must make a sudden and complete exodus from the "I" that was, and march through the desert towards the "I" that we can be. <http://www.chabad.org/holidays/passover/pesach.asp?AID=274822>

Prohibition of Chametz

What is Chametz? Chametz is a general term for all food and drink made from wheat, barley, rye, oats, spelt or their derivatives, which is forbidden on Passover because it is leavened.



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Cleaning for Pesach should be viewed as a process of ridding our homes and ourselves of chametz. Ridding ourselves from chametz takes lots of work, time, energy. We look in every corner of our lives, use different cleaning methods, etc.

The laws about the prohibition of Chametz are very stringent. We must not have even a single bit of chametz in our possession, we should not even 'see' chametz. The idea behind the severity is that chametz is a symbol of evil desires, etc. And **we must do all we can destroy every single tiny bit of chametz**. For one week each year, the Torah reminds us of the importance of destroying the 'chametz' – the evil desires – the Yetzer hara.

The yetzer hara is "represented by chametz because it thrives on laziness, always seeking the path of least resistance. **To create matzah, the opposite of chametz, it is essential to work with enthusiasm and speed**. If these are absent for even a short time, the dough will automatically become chametz." [Gateway to Judaism, 197]

Chametz and matzah are made of the same ingredients. The only difference is in the way it baked. If the flour/ water combination is not completely baked in the prescribed 18 minutes, then it is chametz. We learn here that **every second counts**.

The Hebrew word for spoil is chometz (vinegar is chometz). There is a saying: "When you have the opportunity to do a mitzvah, don't let it spoil (chometz) in your hand." In other words, don't push it off – don't procrastinate. **Chometz symbolizes procrastination**. This week of Pesach, we should think about how to deal with our procrastination.

Why is chametz only forbidden on Passover?

by Rabbi Yossi Marcus (askmoses.com) <http://www.askmoses.com/article.html?h=199&o=451>

The Exodus from Egypt was the beginning of our birth as a nation at Sinai. So, in our spiritual service during Passover we are at the beginning of our trip. In the beginning, the most important thing is to rid oneself of arrogance. If you're full of yourself there's no way you're going to absorb anything: a full cup cannot contain anything. When a student wants to learn from the master he's got to remove any preconceptions and be totally open to this new wisdom. But once Passover is over and we're out of the beginning stages, then a sense of self becomes a good thing. It doesn't have to lead to arrogance it can lead to confidence. When you're feeling good about doing the right thing that's holy chametz.

That's what's happening on Passover. We're emptying ourselves of all Chametz so that we can be a vessel.

But once Passover is over and we're out of the beginning stages, then a sense of self becomes a good thing. It doesn't have to lead to arrogance it can lead to confidence. When you're feeling good about doing the right thing that's holy chametz. That's why on Shavuot, the holiday that comes after Passover, chametz not only is not forbidden it becomes a Mitzvah. The offering that was brought in the Temple on Shavuot had to contain chametz.

Question: If chametz represents such evil, **why are we allowed to eat chametz all year**, except Pesach? Pride in itself is not bad – it depends how it is used. Jewish pride, used correctly, is a good thing. On Pesach, we learn to destroy the negative aspects of the trait. **Once Pesach is over, and we have hopefully learned the lesson and applied it to our lives, we can once again eat chametz.**



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Cleaning for Pesach

"My grandfather, the Rebbe of Bobov, once visited Baron Rothschild, who proudly showed him a separate house that was his Passover home. It was not used all year round, and never had any chametz brought into it. My grandfather told the baron that he was missing the point. Angels are perfect. They have no defects, and do not have to do anything to improve themselves. People are imperfect. We have faults we must eliminate. **The point is not to never have any chametz, but rather to be able to rid ourselves of the chametz we have.** The idea is to have chametz in our homes all year round, and to completely eliminate it for Pesach so that not even a crumb remains." (Twerksi, 253)

Kashering for Pesach

Many people kasher some of their utensils so that they can be used for Pesach. Even though, most people today can afford to have a separate set of everything for Pesach, they still kasher a few things. Perhaps this is to reinforce the feeling that **we, too, should undergo a purifying process.** (Twerski, 253)

The Torah refers to this holiday as Festival of the Matzahs

"We generally refer to this festival as Pesach (Passover), whereas the Torah refers to it only as Chag Hamatzos. Why? R' Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev explained that the term Passover refers to the fact that Hashem 'passed over' the homes of the Israelites when he smote the Egyptian firstborn. This was a manifestation of Hashem's love for us.

The term 'matzah', on the other hand, is an allusion to the haste of the Israelite's departure from Egypt. "They baked the dough that they took out of Egypt into unleavened cakes, for they could not be leavened, because they were driven from Egypt and could not delay, nor had they made provisions for themselves (Exodus 12:39). With no food other than matzah, they strode into the arid desert with complete trust that Hashem would provide for them.

In the Torah, Hashem praises the Israelites for their trust in Him, hence the Torah refers to the festival with the praise of Israel – the festival of Matzos. We, on the other hand, wish to express our gratitude to Hashem for His mercy in sparing the Jewish firstborn, and therefore we refer to the festival as Passover." (Twerski, 255)

The Matzah in time of Exodus

"The matzah we use today is different than the 'unleavened cakes' our ancestors ate. We make the matzah into thin wafers because that is the safest way to assure that it will be baked thoroughly. Some Sephardic Jews have soft matzos, much like pita bread. They bake their matzah according to their unbroken tradition." (Twerski, 255) Families should follow their family's tradition. If there is no evident family tradition, they should follow the tradition of the community.

Sample Strategy: Create a Venn Diagram comparing Chametz and Matzah. What it is made from? Time it takes to make? The way it looks? The way it tastes? When we eat these foods? Why? The words (difference is Hei and chet). And then bring out the above lessons.

Sample strategy: The children should write down the messages they learn from matzah on papers that look like Matzah.

Sample strategy: If you have school on the Sunday of Erev Pesach (5767), you can do Bedikat Chametz with them. Or adapt the activity.



Pesach Ideas for Hebrew School Programs

- Hide the bread, and at each spot where the children find bread, you can have an anecdote about Pesach, Chametz. This can be a question, riddle, something new. Then do real bedikat chametz. The rabbi holds a candle, but the children hold flashlights.
- At each stop, the children can find the bread, but also a paper with a 'chametz' trait – false pride, etc. or a limitation (from the concept of breaking through our Metzrim). Discuss each one as it is found. Then go through the other steps of ridding ourselves of chametz – Bedikat Chametz, Bittul Chametz (Kol Chamira), Biur Chametz, and then actually not having any chametz in our possession. Do these with the actual chametz bread, and also with the chametz traits. Explain the symbolism to the children. Actually burn those 'chametz trait' notes with the chametz. (Perhaps smear some of the ashes onto a page in their haggadah with an explanation and pictures of the bedikat chametz).
- You can expound on this topic by discussing how we begin our Pesach preparations by cleaning our homes to get rid of every crumb, and the symbolism of that (see above). We kasher our utensils, and the symbolism of that (see above). We eat only special Kosher for Passover foods, etc. Show how we do these things literally to prepare for Pesach, but also these actions symbolize how we should become better people.

Sample Strategy: Create a T chart. On one side, jot down the ways we prepare ourselves for Pesach. On the other side, brainstorm about what we can learn from these. Use the lessons described above.



Pesach Topics ...

Topic 4: Festival of Freedom (זמן חרותנו)

Personal Freedom

Ridding oneself of the traits represented by chametz and performing the mitzvah of eating Matzah enable the Jew to overcome his own faults and the blandishments of the mundane world. He is then able to free himself from spiritual exile, and enjoy this freedom throughout the year. <http://www.chabad.org/holidays/passover/pesach.asp?AID=1819>

The day we left the borders of Egypt we were "free" in the conventional sense - no longer could an alien taskmaster dictate what we must or may not do.

We then proceeded to also free ourselves of the alien influences that constrained us from within the pagan habits and mind-set that centuries of subjection to the depraved culture of Egypt had imposed on us, and our own inborn negative inclinations. Then, at Sinai, we were empowered to strive for yet a deeper dimension of freedom - a freedom that is not the negation of adversarial forces and influences, but the surmounting of our own, positive psychic and behavioral patterns. <http://www.chabad.org/holidays/passover/pesach.asp?AID=1776>

Mitzvot bring out our freedom

Through all the laws and customs of the Seder night, what we are really emphasizing is the most important thing about ourselves: "Once we were slaves, and now we are free." As we go through the rituals and recite the *Haggadah*, and as we discuss the written text and what lies beyond it, we must bring ourselves to understand ever more deeply that we shall truly be redeemed only when we take it upon ourselves to fulfill our need to live in our own unique way - that is when we become truly free.

<http://www.chabad.org/holidays/passover/pesach.asp?AID=1782>

It is true freedom because we have restrictions.

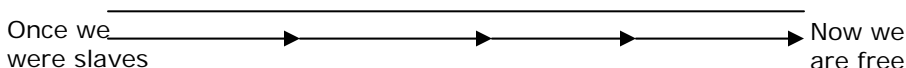
<http://www.chabad.org/holidays/passover/pesach.asp?AID=161003>

Freedom in Prison/ Holocaust

Throughout the ages, Jews have celebrated Pesach. In fact, this is the 33rd time that Pesach is being celebrated. Throughout our history, there have been times that the Jews were not free – Holocaust, Russia, Chanukah, Purim, Spain, etc. Yet, we Jews always celebrated Pesach. Stories abound about how the Jews celebrated Pesach during the Holocaust, in Soviet prisons, in Spain. They were celebrating our freedom, yet they were not free. What does freedom really mean?

Story of Mendelovich <http://www.innernet.org.il/article.php?aid=275> Scenario 3

Sample Strategy: Draw the following diagram on the board or posterboard.



Discuss the difference between being slaves and being free. Are they really exact opposites? What is freedom? What has to happen for slaves to really be free? What are the steps that the Jews took to really be free from Egypt?



Pesach Ideas for Hebrew School Programs

Draw another line exactly as the first. Now discuss what does it mean that we (in our generation) once were slaves? What does freedom mean in our generation? What steps do we need to be free?

Sample Strategy: Discuss “what is true freedom?” Following the mitzvot brings true freedom (see above and further sichos). Use the Pesach mitzvot to explain the concept. Why we eat the matzah, retell the story, etc.

Sample Strategy: Discuss different ways people celebrated Pesach (the Holiday of Freedom) while in prison, exile, Holocaust, etc. Why was Pesach so important to them?



Pesach Topics ...

Topic 5: Purpose of the Seder

The word Seder means "order"; it is a structure of readings and practices intended to usher in spiritual experience, so that we truly benefit from the spiritual energy of the spring (see Topic 2).

The purpose of the Seder on Pesach eve: to provide every individual with an opportunity to experience an exodus from his own personal house of bondage.

Though we may never have been in Egypt, nor experienced actual slavery, redemption can be real for us, for, as chassidic thought explains, Egypt is not only a geographical location but also a state of mind. In fact the Hebrew name for Egypt, Mitzrayim, is almost identical to the word meitzarim, which means straits or limitations.^[3] In other words, our personal exodus from Egypt involves self-transcendence, lifting ourselves out of our natural limitations.

<http://www.sichosinenglish.org/books/timeless-patterns/31.htm>

There are countless ways in which people are enslaved. Someone who cannot control his anger, greed, etc. is very much a slave to them. Other example: someone who will stop at nothing to achieve fame and recognition, a gambler, chronic smoker (who can't smoke), fashionista, overeating, etc. The message of Pesach is that we must strive to be free, to break the bonds of *any* kind of compulsion. Liberty must be so dear to us that we do not allow ourselves to be under the tyranny of any destructive habit. We are repeatedly reminded of the Exodus so that we can fight any destructive habits to which we may become, or are, enslaved. The Exodus was entirely the work of Hashem. To liberate ourselves from enslavement to destructive habits, we must indeed pray and invoke Hashem's help. However, we must begin with sincere and dedicated effort, and we will then merit the Divine blessing of true, personal freedom (Twerski, 246)

By comparing freedom and slavery on the Seder night each Passover, the Jewish people become reenergized about the concept of freedom.

<http://www.chabad.org/holidays/passover/pesach.asp?AID=275523>

When G-d emancipated us from Egypt, this was only the beginning. It was a physical liberation and but not a total spiritual one. The purpose of *Yetziat Mitzrayim*, G-d's taking us out of Egypt, was to open the path for future personal and collective redemption. The entire purpose of celebrating the Seder is to evoke that initial power of breaking through our boundaries.

So we are not celebrating something that happened 3,000 years ago, but on the contrary. What happened 3,000 years ago was a celebration and initiation of our potential for freedom today.

<http://www.chabad.org/holidays/passover/pesach.asp?AID=1780>



Pesach Topics ...

Topic 6: Tidbits for the Seder

These thoughts can be added as anecdotes in the haggadahs the children are making. Use these as best fits your program.

Soulful Seder Guide

by The Farbrengen Magazine <http://www.askmoses.com/article.html?h=580&o=64413&dns=1>
Insights into the steps of the seder.

Karpas

When we make the bracha, “Borei Pri Ha’Adamah’ by Karpas, we have in mind to absolve us of the need to make the bracha on the marror. The hidden meaning: to free ourselves of marror, of all bitterness. (Twerski, 250)

Why do we have three matzot on the Seder plate?

by Rabbi Yossi Marcus (askmoses.com) <http://www.askmoses.com/article.html?h=581&o=79>

Here are some of the reasons that are given:

1. It is an allusion to the three measures of flour that Abraham asked Sarah to prepare for the angels that visited him after his circumcision. According to the Midrash, the angels visited Abraham on Passover. (It is a tradition that Abraham kept the entire Torah even though it had not yet been given. So he would have celebrated Passover even before the Jews had entered Egypt!) The biblical commentator Alshich says that Abraham wanted Sarah to knead the dough herself (and not delegate the job to a servant) so that she could make sure that it did not become Chametz.
2. It is a remembrance for our Patriarchs, Abraham Isaac and Jacob.
3. Every Shabbat and holiday you need two whole loaves of Challah. [This commemorates the double portion of manna we received in the desert on the day before Shabbat or a holiday.] On Passover we need two whole Matzot for the blessing. So we start out with three because at the beginning of the Seder we break the middle Matzah and we're left with two whole ones for the blessing.
4. The three Matzot represent the Jewish people who are divided into three groups: Kohanim, Levites, and Israelites -- all of whom were saved by the miraculous Passover Redemption.¹

Footnotes 1. Sources: Rav Shlira Gaon and Maaseh Rokeach 16:58, cited in the Rebbe's Haggadah, and explained in Migdal Ohr by Rabbi Ezra Schochet, vol. 7.

Why four cups of wine on Passover?

by Rabbi Yossi Marcus (askmoses.com) <http://www.askmoses.com/article.html?h=582&o=86>

G-d uses four expressions of redemption in describing our Exodus from Egypt and our birth as a nation (Exodus 6:6-7):

1. “I will take you out...”
2. “I will save you...”
3. “I will redeem you...”
4. “I will take you as a nation...”

There are a number of explanations as to the significance of each of these expressions. Here are two basic explanations:

1. Salvation from harsh labor—this began as soon as the plagues were introduced.
2. Salvation from servitude; or the day the Jews left Egypt geographically and arrived at Ramses.



Pesach Ideas for Hebrew School Programs

3. The miracles wrought in Egypt, which inspired the Egyptians to “redeem” their lives by letting the Jews go; or the splitting of the sea, after which the Jews felt completely redeemed, without fear of the Egyptians recapturing them.

4. Becoming a nation at Sinai.

During the Seder we can experience these elements of redemption in a spiritual sense, by leaving our “Egypt” and our servitude to our egos.

Sources: Shmot Rabbah end of 86; Ramban and Seforno on abovementioned verses.

Why is Passover 7/8 days?

by Rabbi Herschel Finman <http://www.askmoses.com/article.html?h=283&o=2057289>

Biblically, Passover is seven days and commemorates the time between the actual Exodus from Egypt – which occurred on the 15th of Nissan – and the splitting of the Red Sea – which happened seven days later on the eve of the 21st of Nissan.

Jewish holidays are established based on the lunar cycles. During Temple times, witnesses would come to the Temple in Jerusalem and testify that they had seen the new moon the previous night. After careful interrogation and corroboration, the new month would be declared. Messengers would then be sent to the environs informing the general populace when the month began. These messengers traveled as far as 11 days journey. Jews living outside the eleven day radius would keep an extra day due to the doubt as to which day was actually holiday.

Why seven days of Passover?

by Rabbi Shalom Hazan (askmoses.com) <http://www.askmoses.com/article.html?h=532&o=81257>

Passover is the holiday during which we celebrate our very birth as a nation. It marks a complete change and turn-around. It only makes sense to take an entire week to dwell on, internalize and be inspired (and a little changed...) by this.

What are the various Hebrew names for the holiday of Passover?

by Rabbi Yossi Marcus (askmoses.com) <http://www.askmoses.com/article.html?h=532&o=459>

Passover has three names:

1. The Holiday of Matzot. This is the primary name used by the Torah to describe the holiday.

2. The Season of our Freedom. This is how the holiday is called in the special prayers and Kiddush for Passover.

3. Pesach. Pesach means to “skip” or “leap,” referring to the fact that the houses of the Jews were skipped over while the firstborn of Egypt were killed. This is how Jews refer to the holiday.

The famous chasidic Rebbe, Rabbi Levi Yitzchak of Berdichev pointed out that G-d refers to the holiday in a way that praises the Jewish people who followed Him into a desert trusting that He would provide for them. All they had were a couple of crackers made from dough that did not have time to rise: matzot. And yet they went.

By contrast, the Jewish people refer to the holiday in a way that praises G-d for sparing them during the plague of the firstborn.

The three names also represent a progression:

1. First thing is you have to become egoless like a Matzah—flat and unbloated.

2. This way you can be truly free in this Season of Freedom, since you’re no longer bogged down by your limitations.



Pesach Ideas for Hebrew School Programs

3. At that point to you can make a radical Leap—Pesach—a quantum change that would normally be impossible.¹

Footnotes: 1. Source: Likutei Sichot 17:71ff.

"Aviv" means springtime. The Torah commands us to schedule the holiday of Passover during the springtime, but never explicitly dubs the holiday as the "Chag HaAviv." This poetic name has caught on, though, in Modern Hebrew.

Asking Questions: An important theme of Pesach

By Simon Jacobson (askmoses.com) <http://www.askmoses.com/article.html?h=157&o=2044216>

Excerpts from the article; the messages are very interesting and relevant. In homes across the world, young children begin the Passover Seder by asking the Four Questions. ... Nothing is more freeing than the human need to challenge the status quo and believe that through our exploration things can become better. ... Is there a more empowering experience than that simple gesture of allowing you to be you – the freedom to express yourself, to allow your true self to emerge? To be uniquely you. ... Jewish tradition alters many activities on the Seder night for one reason only: to provoke and motivate children from the youngest age to question, to probe, to ask and ask again.

Remembering The Future

by Rabbi Mordechai Gafni (askmoses.com) <http://www.askmoses.com/article.html?h=533&o=63137&dns=1>

Excerpts from the article; the messages are very interesting and relevant. The Seder is a mystical, magical night. ... celebrating the liberation and birth of our nation. It is the night when parents give their children the gift of identity.... he understands intuitively that his existence in the world as a Jew has meaning and purpose. ... "Passover Time" — a present which holds both past and future. Prisoners who were incarcerated for decades in the gulag say that their ability to experience life through the prism of their memories and dreams was an anchor of hope in an unbearable present. It was this that gave them hope. ... I am the sum total of my memories of past and future. ... A Jew's identity is formed by the symbiosis of the story of his person and the story of his people. The Passover Seder is a meal of memory. We remember and identify with the certainty that Israel felt in the infancy of its nationhood. ... We end the Seder with a dream for the future. Next Year in Jerusalem. Not only Jerusalem, the physical city, but Jerusalem, the symbol of a better tomorrow. In the Passover Seder, we give our children the promise of a dream and the sweetest gift of all: the gift of memory.



Pesach Ideas for Hebrew School Programs

Misc. Activities

Find Out What Kids Know

Create a KWL chart.

Create a Holiday Chart with these columns: Foods | Prayers | At Home | In the Synagogue | Heroes | Objects | What holiday means to me | Songs. (You can add more as necessary or age appropriate.)

Ask kids to write on posts-its what they know about the holiday. Then they should post the post-its in the correct categories on the chart. (Do on posterboard rather than the board so you can use the poster boards the following week)

Pesach Glossary –

Every time a new term is introduced, the children should add them to their Pesach glossary.

They can add drawings or photographs. Add to their Haggadah.

Add the new word to the Pesach wall.

References to the Haggadah

Only if you are using a child-friendly haggadah (ie: one that summarizes the paragraphs in the Haggadah, or at least gives each paragraph a title), have the kids look through the haggadah for references to freedom, to the holiday, etc.

Discussion: How to eat Kosher for Passover when everyone around you aren't

Matzah Ball: A Passover Story is about (disclaimer, I never read it, but it looks like it is a great discussion starter.) a boy who goes with his (non Jewish) friends to a baseball game during Pesach. He has only 'Kosher for Passover' foods. This story talks about how it may not always be easy to lively Jewishly, but it is important it is to do the right thing. Have a discussion about what is 'Kosher for Passover', and how to explain to friends why you eat only 'Kosher for Passover' during this week.

Seder Scavenger Hunt

Around the room, set up stations with info about the seder. Some can be info on posters – with interesting and relevant pictures or props. *The idea is to pique their curiosity and for them to find some of the answers themselves.* For info about each item on the seder plate, and every step of the seder: <http://www.chabad.org/library/howto/wizard.asp?AID=120432>

Divide the group into smaller groups/ pairs. All children should get a scavenger hunt list, and they have to find the items/ info around the room. When the kids find the answer, they can write it down, or add the 'answer' sticker into their haggadah.

Tips:

- The list should be in chronological order or the seder, so that once it is completed, it can be used as an haggadah at the seder.
- Use 'answer stickers' to save time and ensure that the children have the correct answers. *At each station, the children have to demonstrate that they know the answer and then they can get the appropriate sticker.*
- You can use the same props and posters for different age groups. The text for the different age groups can be in different colors – the younger children only need to read what is in red, the blue is for the older children.



Pesach Ideas for Hebrew School Programs

Haggadah

Make a haggadah and add to it each year. For the youngest group, have just the basics. Each year add some more pages with new details. By the time the child has graduated from Hebrew School, they will have a thick Hagaddah.

- Put the papers in **sheet protectors** (protects the papers from the wine, and from fading). *Do not use construction paper, they fade too quickly*
- Put all the papers in a **binder**. Use a binder with a see-view cover, so they can make a cover. (Start off with a smaller binder (1/2") – good for little kids. As there are more and papers added, you can change the binder to a larger one.)
- Design the papers so that they are **visually appealing**, with graphics, not too many fonts, etc. Print on nice paper.
- Include **songs**
- Include **prayers**, Hebrew reading
- Include places for the **kids to write something** about what they learned, or to draw.
- You can also include something for the parents (or the children when they are older) to read on the bottom of the page. For example, the top 7/8 of the page is dedicated to the child at the age that he is now, the bottom 1/8 has a deeper insight that is relevant to the topic of the page. On a page about the Seder plate, include **some anecdotes** about lessons we can learn from the objects of the seder plate (great info on askmoses.com)
- Include **photos** of the children in the Hagadah (*more of chance that the parents will keep it*)
 - Photos of the kid doing the same thing each year. (ie: take a picture of the kid biting into a Matzah every year. They can see how much they've grown)
 - Photos of the kid doing different parts of the Seder.
- Give each child a **box** to put the binder in. (literature boxes from Uline work well, and are inexpensive). The children can decorate the box at home. You can provide coloring sheets, stickers, etc. On the inside cover of the box, place a sticker explaining Pesach and the project. Include your logo, phone number and website. This box will become an heirloom, and you want the children to be able to find you later.
- **Educate the parents** and the children about how every year we grow on what we learned the previous year, and that this project teaches that to the kids. Encourage them to save the Hagadah from year to year.
- -- Design the entire project so that if a child does not bring back the Hagadah, or comes to your Hebrew School at a later age, he can still gain from this project. Perhaps have copies of previous year's pages, or the wording on the pages for older children can be worded in a way that includes lessons from previous years.
- -- For the youngest children, you can create a Number Haggadah. Use Pesach 1-2-3s as a guide.

Pillowcase/ Afikomen Bag/ Matzah Covers

- Create items to be used at the Seder. Whatever you make should be durable and of heirloom quality so that the parents save them from year to year.
- You can iron on a page that describes what the item is and how it should be used, and washed. Use an iron on transfer. (include the Hebrew School name, logo, phone number and website)
- Since we don't have lots of time to spend on crafts, try to incorporate as much Pesach learning into the activity. Perhaps, you can dye the pillowcase with vegetable dyes, and explain that we only use Kosher-for-Passover ingredients on Pesach.
- Give them a box or nice plastic bag to keep the item in. Give them stickers to put to on the bag/ box "For Passover Use only" "no Chametz"



Pesach Ideas for Hebrew School Programs

- Some ideas: -- You can use the chiffon, pull string bags for Afikomen bags. The children can decorate with paints, lace (glue on). – use lace doilies for matzah covers.

Extend the Pesach message

- On the first school day after Pesach, review the story of Pesach, and discuss why the Jews were worthy of being redeemed: because they held onto their Jewish names, clothing and language. In other words, they held onto their Jewish identity. Expound on that topic.

4 Questions

- Go through each of the 4 questions, inspiring discussion about how each one helps us understand the story and messages of Pesach. Use visuals, or the exact objects.
- A tape/ CD of the 4 questions should be playing in the background as the children do their crafts. Give each child a CD to take home (with a reminder not to use during the Holiday)

Prepare items for the Seder

If you have school on the Sunday of Erev Pesach (5767), you can prepare the items of the Seder with the children. Explain each object, how it used, etc. as you prepare them. Provide them with a Seder checklist. As they learn about something, they can write it down, or you can provide a sticker with the info (so that you know they have the correct info and this is also quicker).

- **Zeroa.** Roast it with the children. Explain how it reminds us of Korban Pesach brought in the Bet Hamikdash. Perhaps discuss what Pesach must have been like in the times of the Bet Hamikdash (all Jews from all over the country coming to Jerusalem, all coming to the Bet Hamikdash to bring the Korban Pesach, all Jews praying together (did they sing Hallel together?), then eating the Korban Pesach together as families. See more details in Three Special Days by Yaakov Meir Strauss (Feldheim), a wonderful historical tale detailing the bringing of the Korban Pesach A young boy and his family celebrate Pesach during the time of the Second Temple.
- **Beitzah** Put up the egg first, so that it has time to cook. Explain how this reminds us of the other korban brought in the Bet Hamikdash.
- **Marror** Perhaps the rabbi can actually grate it in front of the children, and let the children see his tears. They can all try and they will all be brought to tears.
- **Karpas** Check parsley for bugs. Discuss how/ when it will be used in the seder.
- **Charoset** Make it together. Make some without the wine so that they can bring it home.
- **Chazaret** Check for bugs. Then dry them. Explain that we dry them so that when we make the Korach sandwich (you can discuss the sandwich too), the matzah will not get wet.
- **Matzah** Help them find whole matzahs. Explain why we use only whole matzahs at the seder. You can also show them that you are looking for matzahs where the dough has been 'folded over' or has bubbles. Since hand matzahs are expensive, only the teacher can handle them. But explain to the children that these are expensive and why they are – hand made and why they are handmade. And why we feel it is worth the extra money. (Hiddur Mitzvah)
- **Polish the Silver cups** – Hiddur Mitzvah
- **Wine/ grape juice** Point out the alcohol level on the bottle. Show them that you use a wine with a low alcohol level. And that grape juice is good for the children. You can talk about what makes a wine kosher for Passover.



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- **Washing Cups** Count them to make sure there are enough for the crowd. Show how they are used. Make sure there are enough clean towels or towel paper.
- **Haggadahs** Make sure there are enough for the crowd. Show them the inside of the Rabbi's haggadah – how he has notes for what he will say at the Seder, wine on the pages, etc. If possible, show an old haggadah. Also show the ones that the crowd will use. Bring out ones that the children have made in the past, or from the rabbi's children.
- **Salt Water** Show how it made. Explain why/when it used.
- **Afikomen bag** Explain how/ why we break the middle matzah and then hide the afikomen.
- **Cup for Elijah** Explain how we can not see Elijah, but he is definitely there. So we greet him with pomp – candles, songs, etc.
- **Preparing for the meal** the children should all wash their hands (to get rid of any chametz), and pitch in to help prepare the meal. They can peel potatoes and make a kugel. Teacher can show them how she checks the eggs. Show them a 'secret' family recipe or kitchen tip. Maybe make 'mayonnaise' with them. Explain why we are so extra careful that we make our own mayonnaise.
- **Pillows**
- **Candles**
- **Benchers** - show them that the hagaddah includes the benching
- **Siddurim** for praying the Maariv (and daytime services)

--Don't forget to thank them for helping prepare the communal seder. Take pictures of the kids preparing and hang them up in the Chabad House so that the seder participants can see the kids helping.

--Show them pictures of the tables set up from previous years. Stress to them that these pictures were taken before the chag started.

--If you will do this activity, advertise it early to the parents so that they too can help/learn. And maybe even join the Seder that their children helped prepare.

--As they are preparing some things you can have Pesach songs on in the background.

--If they are able to stay after Hebrew School, perhaps they can help you prepare the nitty gritty of the seder – setting tables, folding hagadahs, hanging Pesach decoration/ pictures, peeling potatoes. The feeling of being involved in the preparations is very powerful. Take pictures.



Pesach Ideas for Hebrew School Programs

Some Resources – very short list

A Taste of Nostalgia – Twerski

(lots of short anecdotes and stories)

Let My Nation Go – Feldheim

(the story of Pesach with all its details, written as a novel. All meforishim details are cited)

Three Special Days – Feldheim

(historical tale of a young boy in Jerusalem during the second Bet Hamikdash)

Chaim Baruch Alevsky's Pesach songs CD – cbachabad@gmail.com

Pesach songs

Askmoses.com

Chabad.org

Sichosinenglish.com –

(Timeless Patterns in Time and others)



We were slaves But now we are free!

<p>We were slaves to Pharaoh in <u>Egypt</u>. We were slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt</p>	
<p>and the L-rd, our G-d, took us out from there with a strong hand and with an outstretched <u>arm</u>. Hashem took us out of there</p>	
<p>If the Holy One, blessed be He, had not taken our fathers out of <u>Egypt</u>, If Hashem hadn't taken our fathers out of Egypt</p>	
<p>then we, our children and our children's children would have remained enslaved to Pharaoh in <u>Egypt</u>. Then we would still be slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt</p>	
<p>Even if all of us were wise, all of us understanding, all of us knowing the Torah, we would still be obligated to <u>discuss the exodus from Egypt</u>; We must share the story of our exodus</p>	
<p>and everyone who discusses the exodus from Egypt at length is <u>praiseworthy</u>. All who discuss the story of the Exodus should be praised.</p>	

In my words:



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We were slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt,

We are slaves to our ego, stuck in our limitations

And with the help of Hashem, we are taken from there

What does it mean that Hashem took us out of there? [He gave us the Torah as a guidebook to a good and meaningful life]

If the Holy One, blessed be He, had not taken our fathers out of Egypt,

If our fathers would have been stuck in their limitations

If our fathers had not received the Torah, and lived a Torah life and passed that on to us

then we, our children and our children's children would have remained enslaved to Pharaoh in Egypt.

Then we too would have remained enslaved to our ego and in our limitations

Then we too would have been enmeshed in a not- so- meaningful life

Even if all of us were wise, all of us understanding, all of us knowing the Torah,

And even if we are all wise and know the Torah

we would still be obligated to discuss the exodus from Egypt;

we are still obligated to discuss how we escaped our limitations

We must share the secret with all

and everyone who discusses the exodus from Egypt at length is praiseworthy.

All who discuss how they escaped their limitations should be praised.

Why are they praised? [Because Torah should be shared with all. Decent morality – all that is in the Torah.]

"The Egyptians treated us badly and they made us suffer, and they put hard work upon us."

"And we cried out to the L-rd, the G-d of our fathers,"

"And the L-rd heard our voice"

"And he saw our suffering,"

"The L-rd took us out of Egypt with a strong hand and an outstretched arm,