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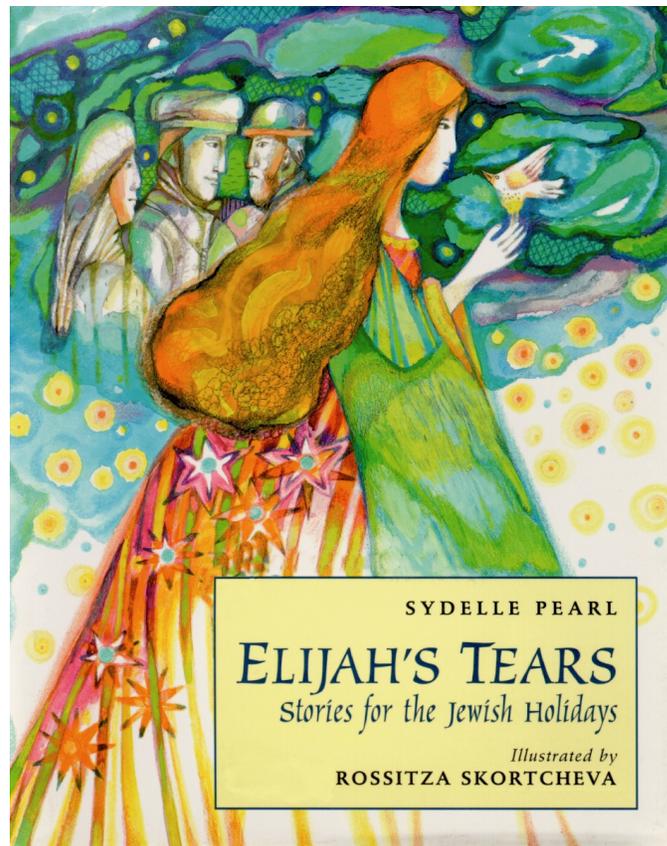
Teacher's Guide

ELIJAH'S TEARS: STORIES FOR THE JEWISH HOLIDAYS

By Sydelle Pearl

Illustrated by Rossitza Skorcheva.

This book contains five original stories about the Prophet Elijah, a beloved Jewish folk character who visits people in need. Each story is linked to a different Jewish holiday, including Yom Kippur, Succot, Hanukkah, Passover and Shabbat, the Jewish Sabbath.



Activities in this study guide:

- *Writing activities
- *Art activities
- *Social studies activities
- *Science activities
- *Websites to visit
- *Acts of kindness

Created by Sydelle Pearl

****Reproducible worksheets****

Activities for the story “Elijah’s Tears”:

Writing: *Write about the act(s) of kindness that occur in this story.

* Write a story about Elijah as a little boy. What sort of a home did he come from? Did he have brothers or sisters? What were his parents like? What was the name of his hometown and where was it located? Did he have any magical powers?

*In this story, Elijah travels to a town he comes to love and establishes a life for himself there. Have you ever traveled to a place away from home that you came to love very much? Did you travel there in real life or in your imagination? What did you do there? Who did you meet? Was it easy or difficult to return?

Art:

- *Draw a picture of Elijah as a young man and then as an old man.
- *Draw a picture of Elijah with his family. You can make a frame for it.
- *Draw a picture of your own family. You can make a frame for it.
- *Make or draw the pearl necklace that the stranger wears in the story. Make or draw how it looks after she gives it to Elijah.

Social Studies: *In this story, Elijah travels to Jewish communities all over the world. Visit the website <http://www.bh.org.il> –this is the website for the Museum of the Diaspora in Israel. In Hebrew it is called Beth Hatefutsoth. You can learn about Jews from all over the world. Many Jewish communities settled in Israel and brought their stories and customs with them.



*Elijah is concerned that the people that he visits in synagogues do not show respect for the Torah. The Torah is a special book containing the Jewish Bible written mostly in Hebrew by a scribe who writes each letter carefully by hand. Hebrew is written and read from right to left, unlike English which is written and read from left to right. Write your name on a piece of paper and hold it up to a mirror. Your name will appear to be written backwards, from right to left. Try writing some words backwards and see if your classmates can read them.

*Visit this website to learn how to write in Hebrew:

<http://www.zigzagworld.com/hebrewforme>

Cooking: *Elijah becomes a baker in this story. Find a recipe for making challah in a Jewish cookbook. Visit a kosher bakery for a tour or have a baker visit your classroom.

Act of Kindness: *Elijah loves to sing in this story. Gather together with classmates and present a concert for a younger class or for members of a nursing home.



Activities for the story “Leaves”:

Writing: *Write about the act(s) of kindness that occur in this story.

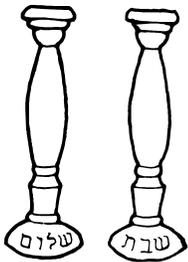
*Write about what you would do if you took a walk in the forest and found leaves made of gold.

* After the Jews fled from Egypt in ancient times, they lived in little huts as they wandered in the dessert. These were called “succot” in Hebrew. What if you had to leave your home suddenly and could only take three things that you could carry with you? Write about what would you take and why.

*Write a story about Elijah and include three things that he always carries with him.

Art:

*Make the golden leaves that fell to the ground every time the stranger took a step.



*Draw the couple the way they looked when they were young, newly-married, and poor. Create a frame for it. Draw the couple the way they looked when they became old.

*Make or draw the golden Shabbat candlesticks in the shape of leaves.

*Make or draw the stranger the way he looked with his clothes all torn. Sew or paste pieces of fabric to add to your picture. Make or draw the stranger the way he looked with his clothes mended.

**Social
Science**

*This story takes place in Poland. Find Poland on a map or a globe. Visit the website for the Beth Hatfutsoth—the Museum of the Diaspora in Israel to learn about the Jews of Poland. <http://www.bh.org.il>

*The word “yarmulke” is used in the story “Leaves” and it is from the Yiddish language. Yiddish is written with Hebrew letters from right to left. Check the glossary at the back of the book to learn some more Yiddish words. Check out the website <http://www.ibiblio.org/yiddish/> to learn more about Yiddish language and culture.

Science: *Find leaves on the ground. Examine them under a microscope. Learn to Identify them. Read about why leaves fall to the ground and change color.

Act of

Kindness: *Is someone new to your class or school? Is there a new store in the neighborhood near the school? Think of a way to welcome them and help them to feel like a part of the community.



Activities for the story “The Tallis”:

Writing: *Write about the act(s) of kindness that occur in this story.

*Write the letter the boy’s mother wrote for him before she died knowing that he would read it when he grew older.

*At his Bar Mitzvah, the boy receives the tallis in a paper bag with the words of Elijah written on it with silver thread. There is also a star from the sky! Pretend you are the boy. Write in your diary about how you felt finding the paper bag and opening it up.

*Write about the most wonderful gift you have ever given to someone. (It does not have to be an object.)

*Write about the most wonderful gift you have received from someone. It doesn’t have to be an object. What is the gift you have not yet received but hope to very much?

Art: *Draw a picture of the boy’s mother before she died.

*Draw a picture of the boy’s father. Draw a picture of the boy. Draw a picture of the man who waited near the synagogue.

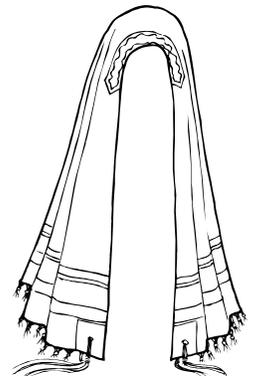
*Make the star that the boy found inside of the paper bag.

Social Studies *Learn about different kinds of prayer shawls, or “tallis” in Hebrew. Some of the shawls have rainbow colors; some people make their own; some women as well as men wear them for worship.

*Tibetan Buddhists unfurl prayer flags; religious Catholics touch rosary beads. Find out other ways that people pray around the world.

Sewing: *Write a message on a piece of fabric. Use a needle and thread or yarn to sew over the written words.

Acts of Kindness *The old man who waited near the synagogue was hungry and cold. Work with your classmates to hold a food drive and/or clothing drive to gather food and/or clothes to give away to those who need them.



Activities for the story “Eliora’s Gifts”:

Writing:

*Write about the act(s) of kindness that occur in this story.

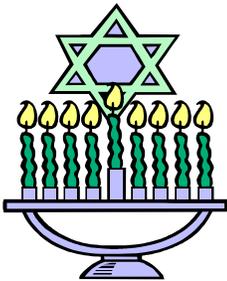
*Pretend that before Eliora dropped gloves for the children in schoolyards and playgrounds, she slipped a letter into each pair. Write a letter she might have written to a child.

*Pretend that before Eliora left her blankets for people in nursing homes and hospitals, she attached a letter to each one. Write a letter she might have written.

*Make a list of all the nature images in the story. Write your own list of nature images that you think are beautiful.

*Pretend that when Eliora was so tired from her travels, she was told a story that helped her feel better. Write the story.

Art:



*Trace your hands two times on a big piece of thick paper or fabric. Cut out each “pair” of gloves. Sew or tape the pieces together. Make the fingertips look like lit candles and hold up your two hands close together - you will have a glove menorah!

*Draw Eliora when she was young and again when she became old.

*Draw a picture of Elijah with his sister Eliora.

*Make the dresses that Eliora wore for each season.

Social Studies

*In Eliora’s travels around the world, she saw many people and animals. Look at an atlas and learn where the countries are in the world. Choose a country you know nothing about and learn about how the people dress, what they eat, what kinds of things grow there, and what kinds of animals live there.

Science:

*As Eliora wove in her garden during the springtime, the birds kept her company. What kinds of birds live in your area? Make a birdfeeder and hang it where the birds will have access to it. What do the birds eat? Which birds come to eat there? Keep a bird journal.

Act of Kindness

*Eliora was a weaver. Pretend that she knew how to knit or crochet as well. See if a parent or teacher who knows how to knit could come to your classroom to teach you how. Make mittens, hats or scarves to give away to children and adults who need them during the wintertime.



Activities for “Joseph the Potter”:

Writing:

*Write about the act(s) of kindness that occur in this story.

* When he was at the kotel, Joseph wrote a prayer. Write your own prayer.

*Write a story of your own based on what you see on the front and back covers of the book.

Art:



*Recreate your version of the kotel. You can make pretend “stones” out of styrofoam, or out of clay and pile them on top each other. You can also draw the kotel on a piece of large mural paper.

*Put all of the prayers you have written out into cracks of the kotel you have made.

*Use clay and shape the bowls and cups that Joseph made in his studio after his encounter with the old blind man. Create other things he made – such as the bird that he made for the old blind man.

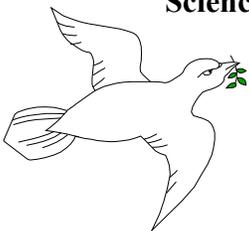
*Invite a potter and/or a ceramic artist to your classroom.

Social Studies: *Braille is a system of raised dots that represent letters of the alphabet that some blind people use to read. It was invented by Louis Braille. See if your public library has any children’s books in Braille.

* Wear a blindfold and trust a partner to lead you around the classroom, hallway or the schoolyard. Write about this experience.

*The kotel is located in Jerusalem, Israel. Visit this website www.isrealemb.org/kids and take a virtual trip to Israel.

Science:



* In this story , Elijah the Prophet flies around the world on a magic bird that Joseph the Potter made for him. What if a bird really had to fly thousands of miles away from home? Would it be able to find its way back?

Pigeons have a special ability to find their way home. Visit the website www.birds.cornell.edu/ppw/coolfacts. Click on the phrase “your pigeons” and learn about the “Children’s Gazette” – poetry, artwork and other pigeon related material sent in by children from around the world.



Act of Kindness

*Joseph the Potter loved to make things for people with his own hands. Make something with our own hands and give someone a surprise gift.



Write your own story about Elijah.

- *What is his disguise?
- *Who needs help in your story?
- *How does Elijah help those in need?
- *Is there an object that Elijah leaves behind for the people he helps? If so, what is it?
- *Make illustrations for your story to accompany the words.
- *Act out your story with some classmates.

Here are other books that feature Elijah:

- _Gold, Sharlya, and Mishael Maswari Caspi. The Answered Prayer and Other Yemenite Folktales; Illus. Marjory Wansch. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1990.
- Goldin, Barbara Diamond. The Magician's Visit: A Passover Tale; Illus. Robert Andrew Parker. New York: Viking, 1993.
- Jaffe, Nina. The Mysterious Visitor: Stories of the Prophet Elijah; Illus. Elivia Savadier. New York: Scholastic, 1997.
- Singer, Isaac Bashevis. Elijah the Slave: A Hebrew Legend. Trans. I.B. Singer and Elizabeth Shub. Illus. Antonio Frasconi. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1970.

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Go to the children's section of your local library and find the nonfiction section. You will see a number on the spine of each book. Find the section with the numbers 390 to 394 on them. These books are about different customs and holidays. You can also find the section with the number 398. These books contain folktales from around the world. Ask a librarian for help if you need it. Here are some book suggestions:

Kindersley, Barnabus and Anabel. Children Just Like Me. New York: Dorling Kindersley, 1995.

Kindersley, Barnabus and Anabel. Celebrations! New York: Dorling Kindersley, 1997.



AUTHOR PROGRAMS FOR GRADES K AND UP:

Sydelle Pearl's book, *ELIJAH'S TEARS: STORIES FOR THE JEWISH HOLIDAYS*, published in February 2004 by Pelican Publishing Company, contains five original stories featuring the Prophet Elijah who magically appears to help people in need. Sydelle is available to visit schools, libraries and other settings to tell stories from her book, to tell traditional Elijah tales, to tell stories from other cultures featuring acts of kindness, to engage audiences in creative writing exercises and to discuss her journey to publication. She also presents workshops for teachers, librarians and parents. She has her MLS from Simmons College and has worked as a children's librarian. Sydelle is a professional storyteller. Contact the School Sales Manager at Pelican Publishing Company, 1-800-843-1724, ext. 319, for more information.

*Storytelling World award-winner

*Highlighted on the Best Books List put out by the Bank Street College of Education in New York City

*Named an American Bookseller "Pick of the Lists"

