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# JEWISH RELIGIOUS EDUCATION: FEASTS OF JOY

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Grade Level/Age 8-9 /14-15y



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## **Jewish Religious Education: Feasts of Joy**

### **Competences/Learning Outcomes**

- To recognize the religious origin of the festivals.
- To understand and interpret festival of joy in its own particular way.
- To identify and analyze different customs related to the feast and explain their meaning.
- To describe rituals of the festivals.
- To be able to share traditions and origins of a particular feast with people from different culture.

### **Grade Level/Age**

8-9 /14-15y

### **Duration**

90 min



## Preparation

- Acquire a box filled with materials related to the feast and bring it to class; pictures, magazines, flyers etc.
- Bring materials for designing a poster; papers, scissors, glue etc.

## Step-by-step description

- Inform students about the task to introduce a feast from their own religion/worldview at the Encounter Day.
- Arrange students to sit in a circle.
- Read the text (M1) about the selected feast and ask students to share their personal experiences on this feast.
- Explain that with this lesson they will explore the different aspects on the feast and write down the categories *music, food, customs, facts about the feast* on the blackboard.
- Divide the participants into 4 groups of 4-5 students to research and work together about the category that they will choose.
- Ask each group to choose one of the categories.
- Distribute the info&task cards (M2) and checklist (M3) to each group.
- Ask students to work on their task in the card by using the materials. Provide sources (such as books, glossaries, online sources, etc.) for the students to search for information, pictures, songs, etc.
- Ask students to illustrate the poster with suitable pictures. (M4)
- Remind each group to use the checklist to help them with the presentation of their results.
- Ask students to hang up their posters and make a presentation about their results.
- Remind students that they are welcome to use all the text, information, and songs for their presentation during the Encounter Day.

## Tips for teachers

- This lesson structure can be used for other religious festivals. So feel free to convert this lesson plan to any other content.
- If the „Feast of Joy“ topic will be designed as lesson series it would be useful to create a calendar of religious holidays (M5) for the classroom that show all the important religious festivals at a glance, so that the students will remember them. Feel free to update this calendar by adding other religious festival.
- The texts in the lesson plan aims to work as a starting point for students to think about the subject. They also work as a base for students' presentation for Encounter Day.





Learning in Encounter for Common Values in Diversity

- Remember to guide students throughout the process.
- Please note that some customs, songs and explanations represent a German way of celebration. If you are from other Jewish traditions feel free to add your own songs, customs etc.



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## Materials

### [M1] General Info Text

#### General Info Text about Hanukkah

The word "Hanukkah" means "consecration," because the Jews remember the rededication of the temple in Jerusalem and the "miracle of light", which based in tradition on events over 2000 years ago. An old legend tells that to celebrate the rededication, the Jews had to light the menorah. They had only little holy oil. The oil they found burned miraculously for eight days. The Hanukkah festival begins on the eve of Hanukkah and lasts for eight days. Hanukkah is one of the Jewish holidays mentioned only in the Talmud. Each of the eight days of Hanukkah begins in the morning in the synagogue with a special service. After dark, many Jewish families come together to light Everyone has their Hanukkah, the nine-branched candelabrum with them. While the lights burn, it is customary to sit with them and tell stories that have something to do with the holiday. To the candles, families eat certain foods together and sing. Music plays a big role in the Hanukkah celebration.

### [M2] Infotexts about facts, customs, food and music with recipes and songs

#### Facts about the Hanukkah

- *Read the info text and underline the most important information.*
- *Use this information and any other information from books, glossaries and online sources.*
- *Desing your poster.*

The Hanukkah festival begins on the eve of Hanukkah and lasts for eight days, from the 25th of Kislev to the 2nd of Tewel. Hanukkah is usually celebrated in November or December. A Talmudic tradition tells of the "miracle of light" that occurred over 2000 years ago. The background is the revolt of the Maccabees against the Greek Seleucids, which is described in the biblical apocryphal books of the Maccabees. The King Antiochus of Syria ruled over Palestine, the homeland of the Jews. Antiochus hated the Jewish God, because he himself believed in Greek gods. Therefore, he let pigs run free in the temple of the Jews and dishonored it thus. The Jewish people suffered and wept. 1 Maccabees 4, 52-59 u. 2 Maccabees 10, 1-8 describe how, after the successful revolt by the Maccabees, the temple was cleansed and rededicated. The Talmudic story also tells of the small oil lamp that was found, which miraculously lasted for 8 days. In memory of this miracle (and the rededication of the Temple), the Rabbis instituted the festival of Hanukkah. Hanukkah thus stands for the victory of the weak and became important for Jewish identity – both religious and political.



### How do Jewish families celebrate Hanukkah?

- *Read the info text and underline the most important information.*
- *Use this information and any other information from books, glossaries and online sources.*
- *Design your poster.*

Hanukkah is one of the Jewish holidays mentioned only in the Talmud. These holidays are normal school and work days. As with all holidays, there are different inserts (e.g., the Hallel, a collection of certain psalms) into the prayers (daily morning prayer, grace commemorate) for Hanukkah to highlight the special days. After dark, many Jewish families gather to celebrate the lightening of Hanukkah. Sometimes friends or relatives are also invited. Everyone has their Hanukkah with them. This is the candelabrum with the nine candles. With the middle servant candle, everyone lights their lights, one more candle each day, until on the last day of Hanukkah, all the lights are lit. While the Hanukkah lights burn, it is customary to sit with them and tell stories that have something to do with the holiday. Many children play with the dreidel after the meal. In the process, you can win small gifts such as coins, nuts or cookies.

### Food at the Hanukkah Celebration

- *Read the info text and underline the most important information.*
- *Use this information and visuals for your poster design. Create a recipe book using the recipes.*

To light the candles, many families sing and eat certain foods together. They are almost always fried in oil or deep-fried such as. Potato pancakes (latkes), pancakes or kreppl (sufganiot). Like the candles the oil in the food reminds us of the legend of the miracle of light long ago.

### Music at Hanukkah Festival

- *Read the info text and underline the most important information.*
- *Use this information and visuals for your poster design. Create song booklet with the help of the song lyrics.*

Music plays an important role in the Hanukkah celebration. Songs about the tradition and history of Judaism are sung while lighting the Hanukkah candle. Some texts are traditional prayers, such as the song "Hanerot Halalu." This song is sung after a new light is lit in the



evening. The song "Maoz Tzur" from the 13th/14th century is also often sung in its English version "Rock of Ages". Many songs are also especially for children and are about the customs of the festival: " Oh Hanukkah, oh Hanukkah " or the Hebrew song " Sevivon Sov Sov Sov". Many children's favourite song is: "I have a little Dreidel".

Link to the songs:

Hanerot Halalu

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-baZHwfiQTK>

Maoz Tzur

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-uAaqxVxz6A>

Oh Chanukka, oh Chanukka

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KxH0xF84h\\_0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KxH0xF84h_0)





Sevivon Sov Sov Sov

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x4WGHfvXtB4>





[M3] Checklist

Checklist Music		
<input type="checkbox"/>	What is the significance of music?	
<input type="checkbox"/>	What are the songs?	
<input type="checkbox"/>	When to sing these songs?	
Checklist Facts		
<input type="checkbox"/>	When will the feast be celebrated?	
<input type="checkbox"/>	How long will the feast be celebrated?	
<input type="checkbox"/>	What does the name of the feast mean?	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Why is the feast celebrated?	
Checklist Food		
<input type="checkbox"/>	What is eaten at the feast?	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Why is this food eaten?	
<input type="checkbox"/>	How is the food prepared?	
Checklist Traditions		
<input type="checkbox"/>	What are the traditions?	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Why do these traditions exist?	
<input type="checkbox"/>	How does the feast day work?	



[M4] Image Materials

1



2



3



4



5



6



7



8



9



[M5] Festival Calendar



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Name of the Feast	Description	Date
Day of Rest (Shabbat)	Shabbat is a day of rest and the most important holiday in Judaism. It begins each week on Friday evening and ends on Saturday evening.	Weekly
New Year (Rosh HaShanah)	On Rosh HaShanah, Jews remember the creation of God and the creation of man. The day is also called the "Day of the Poignant Shofarot", because it's the beginning of the 10 days of repentance. According to the Mishnah, the day of blowing the shofar is the beginning of the year. The Mishnah is the basic teaching of the Talmud. It contains the most important traditions of Judaism.	September/October
Day of Repentance	Gedaliah Fast - one of the ten Jewish days of repentance; On this day Jews remember Gedalia ben Achikam. After the first temple was destroyed and many Jews lived in exile in Babylon, he ruled the rest of the kingship of Judah 2500 years ago. According to tradition, Gedalia ben Achikam would not listen to God's commandment that Judah should be subject to the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezer. Therefore he was killed. On Gedaliah Day, observant Jews abstain from eating from sunrise to sunset and go to the synagogue to pray).	September/October
End of the period of repentance (Yom Kippur)	Yom Kippur is the strictest fast and most important holiday in Judaism. It marks the end of a ten-day period of repentance during which Jews are supposed to make amends with all fellow human beings who have hurt or angered them during the year. On Yom Kippur Day, according to Jewish belief, God decides the fate of each individual and of the people.	September/October



<p>Feast of Tabernacles (Sukkot)</p>	<p>Sukkot is a Jewish biblical pilgrimage festival. Many Jews live in a simple leaf hut for seven days during this time. This is why Sukkot is also called the Feast of Tabernacles. With it, Jews celebrate the second harvest festival of the year. Above all, however, Sukkot reminds them of the hiking in the wilderness, from Egypt to Kenaan.</p>	<p>September/October</p>
<p>End of the Feast of Tabernacles (Shemini Azeret)</p>	<p>Shemini Azeret means "eighth day of assembly". With it and with the festival of Simchat Torah on the following day, Jews end their harvest and Feast of Tabernacles, Sukkot. Only in Israel do Jews celebrate both festivals on the same day.</p>	<p>September/October</p>
<p>Feast of the Joy of Torah (Simchat Torah)</p>	<p>Outside of Israel Simchat Tora is an own festival, in Israel it is together with Shemini Azeret. It is the festival of Torah joy. On this day the reading of Torah ends and starts from the beginning.</p>	<p>September/October</p>
<p>Purim</p>	<p>Reminds the Jewish people that Queen Esther once saved them from death: Queen Esther was a courageous Jewish woman. According to the biblical book of Esther, she asked the king to overturn a death sentence passed by his minister Haman on all Jews. In doing so, she put herself in great danger. In Jewish tradition is Haman the archetype of the antisemite. But because of the victory over the antisemite Purim is a festival of joy, like carnival.</p>	<p>February/March</p>



<p>Feast of Unleavened Bread (Pesach)</p>	<p>Passover means "to pass over something". The Jewish festival thus commemorates the exodus of the people of Israel from Egypt and the events that took place shortly before.</p> <p>Alternative: Passover is one of the biblical pilgrimage festivals and commemorates the liberation of the Israelite people from the Egyptian slavery. Because of the escape, so the narrative, there was no time for the dough to rise, so it was processed unleavened. That is why only mazzah is eaten instead of bread during the time of Passover.</p>	<p>March/April</p>
<p>Thanksgiving and Torah Reception (Shavuot)</p>	<p>Reminds Jews of the reception of the Torah with the Ten Commandments and of the covenant with God at Mount Sinai. The festival also marks the beginning of the grain harvest. This festival is one of three biblical pilgrimage festivals.</p>	<p>May/June</p>
<p>Fasting Day of Mourning and Joy (Tisha beAv)</p>	<p>Reminds many Jews of particularly bad events in the history of the Jewish people. According to Talmudic tradition, these events all fell on the 9th of Av, which is why this day is spent mourning and fasting. In one tradition the Messiah will be born on Tisha beAv and puts an end to suffering. But Jews also believe that God helps them precisely when times are particularly hard. Therefore, Tisha beAv is also a day of expectation and hope for them. Thus, many Jews expect that their saviour will one day be born on Tisha beAv.</p>	<p>July/August</p>





<p>Hanukkah</p>	<p>Hanukkah is a Jewish festival of lights. With it, many Jews still rejoice over some important events more than two thousand years ago. These include the liberation of their people from Greek rule, the second dedication of their second temple and a miracle of light.</p>	<p>November/December</p>
<p>New Year Festival of Trees (Tu biShvat)</p>	<p>Tu biShvat marks the beginning of the new harvest year for Jews. In addition, Jews honour the fruit trees with this festival, on which the first buds can just be seen at this time of year.</p>	<p>January/February</p>



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