

EXPERIENCE PASSOVER

IN 90 MINUTES!

SUGGESTED GRADES: 3rd – 5th

PREPARATION: Four corners of a large room or four separate rooms, 4 leaders, parsley, salt water, charoses, red finger-paint, and matzot, brown construction paper, poster paper, plastic spoons, handi-wipes, glue sticks, suitcase to pack, labeled boxes to pack, etc.

INSTRUCTIONS: Make sure the students know this is “pretend”! Explain to them that they will move from one room to another to experience the lifestyle of the Jewish Israelites in Egypt. The group of students is divided into the four rooms. Each leader begins his/her 20 minute session by reading the section from the Book of Exodus and performing the suggested activity. Have the students then sit on the floor or in their pretend slave quarters and discuss the experience (see questions). Towards the end of the 20 minute session take time to share the appropriate food, stressing the symbolism each food has with the group experience.

Pyramid Station

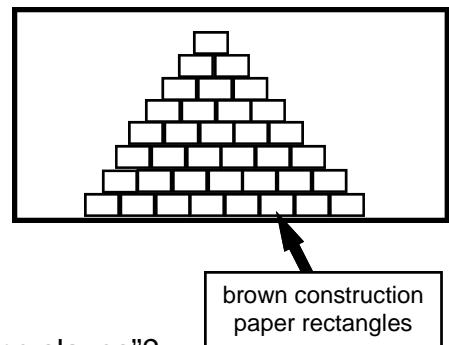
BIBLICAL SOURCE: Exodus 1:8-14

PREPARATION: Tape sheets of poster paper on the blackboard or wall. Cut brown construction paper into 8-1/2” x 6” bricks. Provide several glue sticks. Bring a bowl of charoset so each student can have a taste. Use plastic spoons, one for each student.

ACTIVITY: Pretend the students are slaves in Egypt and the adult is Pharaoh. In a demanding voice, tell the students to take bricks and paste them on the poster paper to make a pyramid. As they work criticize their work in a stern voice.

DISCUSSION:

What does it mean to be a slave?
What kind of life would we have?
What does it mean: Not to be free?
Who would determine how we would spend our day?
If we wanted to “goof off”, could we?
What might happen if we didn’t do as we were told?
What kind of work would we do?
Why is it important that we “remember that we were once slaves”?
Why do we eat charoset?



Note to the leader: Stress the importance of “remembering” and that we must work to maintain our freedom. We must also help keep everyone free. Ask the class if they know of any Jews, today, who are not free.

SYMBOL: Share the charoset with the students.

SLAVE QUARTERS

BIBLICAL SOURCE: Exodus 1:13-14; 1:22

PREPARATION: Scatter some old sheets, rugs blankets over the floor to create slave quarters. Include a bucket and old broken dishes and utensils. Provide enough parsley and salt water so the students can dip the parsley in salt water.

ACTIVITY: Pretend you are all slaves living in Pharaoh's Egypt. Have the students sit on the blankets and pretend they are going through a day in the slave quarters. Use the discussion questions and then eat parsley dipped in salt water.

DISCUSSION:

It's night. Where do you sleep? How comfortable is it?
What do you sleep on? Who is with you?
Do you have your own room? Do you have your own bed?
If you had to sleep on the floor, how rested would you be the next day?
How do you get food?
What do you think about if you are a slave?
How do you think you would feel about your future?
What if you had children? What about their future?
What part of the Seder reminds you of the sadness and bitterness of the life of a slave?

SYMBOL: Share some parsley, dipped in salt water (tears).

MARKING THE DOORPOSTS

BIBLICAL SOURCES: Exodus 12:3-8 and Exodus 12:12-13

PREPARATION: Draw a full size door and doorpost on the posterpaper. Put red tempera paint in a small bowl. Have handi-wipes -1 per student to clean hands.

ACTIVITY: Read bible sources. Have students use their fingers to put a red "X" on the doorpost with the red tempera paint.

DISCUSSION:

Why did the Israelites mark the doorpost of their homes with blood when they lived in Egypt?
What "passed over" the Israelites?
Why did they use a lamb?
(It set them apart from the Egyptians – the Israelites were different.)
Was that a good or bad thing?
What part of the Seder symbolizes this activity? (lamb shank bone)

SYMBOL: Lamb shank bone. Ask a student to "mark" the poster paper door post with "blood" (use one finger and dip in red tempera paint).

LEAVING EGYPT

BIBLICAL SOURCES: Exodus 12:34-39

PREPARATION: Suitcase and boxes labeled with different household and personal items such as clothes, books, food, toys, kitchen supplies, etc. Box of matzo.

ACTIVITY: Pretend you have to leave your home in a hurry. Fill a suitcase with different household and personal items such as clothes, kitchen supplies, books, pets, food, toys, and so on. How many of these boxes can they fit in the suitcase? What should they leave behind?

DISCUSSION:

We are leaving Egypt before Pharaoh changes his mind!

How do you feel about leaving what you know and going to what is strange?

What did you decide to take with you?

What did you leave behind?

What do you do with your animals? Your pets?

How would you carry your possessions?

What about your food?

Who would you follow? What kind of person?

Would Moses be a good leader?

Why wouldn't someone who has grown up as a slave make a good leader?

Why is food so important for you to pack? Where were the Israelites going?

What is the most basic food? If you are in a hurry, what's the problem with making bread?

What Seder symbol reminds us of the speed with which the Israelites left Egypt?

SYMBOL: Eat the matzo.