

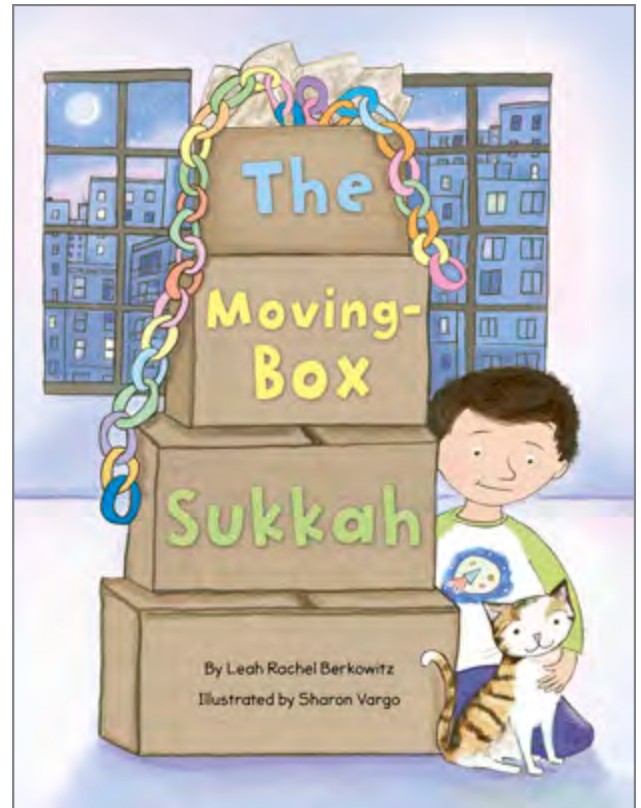
The Moving-Box Sukkah

By Leah Rachel Berkowitz | Illustrated by Sharon Vargo

READING & ACTIVITY GUIDE

About the Book

Everything is different and nothing feels like home for a boy who has moved to a new city with his mom. As they unpack together, he can't find his special blue blanket, he misses his old yard, and he worries that they won't be able to celebrate holidays as they once did. Calm and sensitive guidance from his mom, who describes how the Israelites had to move and adapt to new surroundings throughout the ages, also includes some hilarious ideas from the rabbis of long ago as they tried to imagine where it might be possible to build a sukkah—the temporary hut where ancient Israelites sheltered during their pilgrimages. The boy begins to see that different isn't necessarily worse, and a new place can begin to feel more like home, especially when family is together. Using his ingenuity, he and his mom use the moving boxes littering their home to make the three walls of the sukkah, bring some branches from the park to make the roof, and after finding his special blue blanket, use its stars as the night sky.



Key Themes:

Family; moving to a new city; redefining traditions; coping with change; celebration; Sukkot; creative thinking

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Ages 5–8 years

Use these questions to preface and conclude a reading of this book with children.

Encourage them to share their observations as you read the book together, and take time to linger on pages or spreads that generate more discussion.

Before Reading

- What fun and creative things have you done with a box?
- If you ever moved or had to pack your things, how would you feel if you thought you forgot something important or sentimental to you? What could you do about it?
- What type of feelings come up for you when you think about moving? Or someone else moving? (This question can be posed differently if the reader has personal experiences of moving).

After Reading

- What are some creative places you could try to build a sukkah?
 - What type of materials might you need?
- What are ways that helped the boy in the story feel better about the changes between his old house and new apartment?
- What skills do you think can help you when things change and are out of your control? (Examples from the book include: recalling nice memories, having familiar item/person to comfort, finding the positives in the new situation, creating new traditions)

Optional: Extension Activity

Build your own sukkah, with three walls and a top through which you can see the stars. You could make one that is big enough for you to fit inside or a model of one that may be smaller and can be put on a table.

The ideas are endless and can include but aren't limited to:

- Boxes
- Blankets
- Legos
- Chairs
- Shoebox
- Robes
- Pipe cleaners
- Minecraft (creating a virtual sukkah)
- Paper and tape

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Character Cut Outs

