



Parent Page

Look at Me: I Can Celebrate Shabbat

By Maxine Segal Handelman

Dear Parent,

Shabbat Shalom! Your child has been exploring ***Look at Me: I Can Celebrate Shabbat*** in school. This booklet introduces the key vocabulary of Shabbat, including: creation, day of rest, blessings, Kiddush, hallah, and havdalah. Activities teach Shabbat traditions while developing key learning-readiness skills, such as counting and recognizing colors. For example, students count the letters in the word “Shabbat.” During an exercise about the blessing over wine, Kiddush, they differentiate between red and purple grapes.

When you share this *Look at Me* booklet with your child, you create an important link between your child’s experiences at school and at home. What better way to welcome Shabbat than to seek out the blessings of this day of rest and discover that your child is the biggest blessing of all! You will delight in joining your child on the journey of discovery.

Bringing *Look at Me* to Life

Many pages of this *Look at Me* booklet include drawings of little bears. These bears bring the activities to life and ask us to consider the content of the page in new ways:

- Sometimes the bears invite your child to imagine, with questions such as, “What can you create?” (page 2) Take the opportunity to imagine with your child. Ask open-ended questions that will help your child develop his or her ideas further, such as “Why do you think God rested on the seventh day of Creation?”
- Sometimes the bears propose an analytical question, such as “How are Shabbat Candles different from birthday candles?” (page 7) Show your child real examples of both kinds of candles and let him or her explore the question concretely, through touch, sight, even smell. Then expand the exploration, by offering more candles, such as long tapers or a havdalah candle.

Enriching Your Shabbat Celebration

As you delve into *Look at Me: I Can Celebrate Shabbat*, consider the many activities you can initiate that build on, expand, and enrich the activities in the booklet. For example, you might:

- Watch the sun set and let your child see Shabbat begin. Ask your child to tell you about the beautiful colors he or she sees. Notice with your child how the world around you changes as the sun sinks and the light fades.
- Practice singing the Shabbat blessings over the candles, wine, and hallah. See the back of this page or visit www.behrmanhouse.com/family.
- Dance to some fun, modern Shabbat music, such as *I Live in the City: More Songs for Shabbat and Playtime* by Robyn Helzner and *ShirLaLa Shabbat!* by Shira Kline.

- Search the sky for three stars on Saturday night and say goodbye to Shabbat together. Explain to your child that tradition teaches that Shabbat ends when three stars are visible in the sky. It's best to try this activity in the winter when the sun sets earlier.
- Read some wonderful Shabbat and Jewish folk storybooks with your child, such as *It Could Always Be Worse* by Margot Zemach (Farrar, Straus and Giroux) and *The Shabbat Angels* by Maxine Segal Handelman (URJ Press).

Time for Grown-Ups

Shabbat is a holiday for the whole family—children and grown-ups alike. This week, consider the meaning of Shabbat, however you celebrate it, in your own life.

Consider the words of Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel, a leading Jewish theologian of the twentieth century. He called Shabbat “a Palace in Time.” What do you think Rabbi Heschel meant? How does your Shabbat help you become refreshed?

May your home always be filled with Shabbat Shalom, peace, joy, and blessings.

B'simchah – In joy and celebration!

Shabbat Blessings

Blessing Over the Shabbat Candles:

*Baruch Atah, Adonai Eloheinu, Melech
ha'olam, asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav
v'tzivanu l'hadlik ner shel Shabbat.*

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ, מֶלֶךְ
הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו
וְצִוָּנוּ לְהַדְלִיק נֵר שֶׁל שַׁבָּת.

Praised are You, Adonai our God, Ruler of the world, who makes us holy with commandments and commands us to light the candles for Shabbat.

Blessing Over Wine:

*Baruch Atah, Adonai Eloheinu,
Melech ha'olam, borei p'ri hagafen.*

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ, מֶלֶךְ
הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הַגָּפֶן.

Praised are You, Adonai our God, Ruler of the world, who creates the fruit of the vine.

Blessing Over Hallah:

*Baruch Atah, Adonai Eloheinu, Melech ha'olam,
hamotzi lechem min ha'aretz.*

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ, מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
הַמוֹצִיא לֶחֶם מִן הָאָרֶץ.

Praised are You, Adonai our God, Ruler of the world, who brings forth bread from the earth.