

Nisan

The Story of the Exodus from Egypt

In this lesson, we'll learn about the Exodus from Egypt through a game that presents different stages in the story, from the time when the Children of Israel were first enslaved in Egypt to their impressive exodus from Egypt and the splitting of the Red Sea.

Goals

- > The students will learn about what the Children of Israel went through from their going down to Egypt through the Exodus from Egypt.
- > The students will understand the importance of the transmission of "our story" from generation to generation, which has helped to form and strengthen Jewish identity.

Sources

- > From the Haggadah
- > Verses from the story of the Exodus from Egypt in the Book of Exodus
- > From the Mishnah

Ages



Level 1

Can be adapted for Grades 1–3



Level 2

Grades 4–6

Background for Teachers

The holiday of Passover commemorates the Children of Israel's leaving the slavery of Egypt for freedom. The Torah says that this holiday should be celebrated for seven days; outside of Israel, an additional day is added.

The heart of the holiday is the Passover Seder. One of the main mitzvot of the Seder is "And you shall tell your children." In every generation, parents are asked to tell their children the story of the Exodus from Egypt. Over the centuries, our Sages have emphasized the obligation of remembering this story and passing it along to younger generations as a symbol of the identity of the Jewish people and faith in G-d. The message is passed on through the reading of the Haggadah and through symbolic Seder acts. For example, dipping a vegetable in salt water and eating bitter herbs and *charoset* are meant to remind us of the slavery that the Children of Israel experienced. Eating matzah and leaning to the left are meant to remind us that we are free people thanks to the Exodus from Egypt.

Different prompts are also meant to encourage questions and discussion about the story of the Exodus from slavery to freedom. They reflect the expectation, in every generation, for redemption and salvation, as expressed in the Four Questions.

For enrichment: [An informational presentation](#) about the connection between the Seder plate and remembering the exodus from Egypt.

Activities

Opening Hook

Play a game: Assemble the students standing in a circle. Have the first student make some motion instructing the other students to repeat that motion. Next, have the second student do the first motion while adding his or her own new motion, with all the students then repeating those two motions. The third student must repeat the first two motions and add his or her own. Repeat this process until every student has had a turn.

Explain that this is how a story is passed down from one generation to the next. Each generation adds something new of its own to the story before passing it onward. Now, we'll learn about the story of the Exodus from Egypt, which has been passed on from generation to generation, using a digital game - our own new way of telling the story.

Read or write on the board the following sentence from the Passover Haggadah:

”ואפילו כולנו חכמים כולנו נבונים כולנו יודעים את התורה, מצוה עלינו לספר ביציאת מצרים.”

“Even if we are all wise, all clever, all knowledgeable of the Torah, we are, nevertheless, commanded to tell the story of the Exodus from Egypt.”

Ask:

- > What is the main message of this sentence?
- > Why is it important to tell the story of the Exodus from Egypt? What do we learn from this story?
- > We tell the story at the Seder with the whole family, around a beautiful table with special foods and accompanied by songs and unusual actions. To what do all of these things contribute?

Main Activity

From Slavery to Freedom

An adventure game to learn about the story of the Exodus from Egypt



Here is a digital adventure game that follows the journey of the Children of Israel from Egyptian slavery to the exodus to freedom on Passover. The journey is divided into eight parts.

Divide the class up into pairs. Using the character, advance along the path on the numbered cards. At each step, every student pair will be presented with a question or task that corresponds to something in the story. Each time, choose a different student pair to present the answer. If their answer is incomplete or not precisely correct, invite another pair of students to complete or correct it.

Between the stages of the journey, there are “rocks” that represent artistic elements for enrichment, like a song, video, story, etc.

Parts of the Story

1. **Slavery in Egypt:** The Children of Israel were enslaved under Pharaoh, who imposed hard labor and cruel decrees on them, including throwing the baby boys into the river.
2. **Moses in the basket:** Moses was born and saved from Pharaoh's decree by his mother, who put him into a basket on the river, where he was found by Pharaoh's daughter, who raised him in the royal palace.
3. **Moses and the burning bush:** Moses the shepherd saw a bush that was on fire, yet not consumed. He was assigned a Divine mission, to return to Egypt and bring the Children of Israel out of slavery to freedom.
4. **"Let my people go":** The Children of Israel cried out to G-d about the difficulty of their oppressive slavery. Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and asked him to free the people, but in response to that request, Pharaoh increased the people's burden.
5. **The 10 plagues:** G-d struck the Egyptians with 10 harsh plagues, beginning with water that turned into blood and ending with the plague of the firstborn, in an effort to compel Pharaoh to let his people go.
6. **The Exodus from Egypt:** After the plague of the firstborn, Pharaoh hurried to release the Children of Israel, who left Egypt in such a hurry that there was no time for their bread to rise. Instead of bread, they took matzah with them for the journey. The people of Israel were commanded to observe the holiday of Passover.
7. **Crossing the Red Sea:** G-d instructed Moses to stretch out his hand over the water. The sea split into two parts and the Children of Israel were able to cross over on dry land. The Egyptian army chasing the Children of Israel then drowned in the sea that closed up over them.
8. **Giving thanks and continuing the journey:** The Children of Israel sang the "Song of the Sea" to thank G-d for the miracle that saved them. They began the long journey through the desert to Canaan - is the Land of Israel.



Conclusion

The students reached the last stage, congratulations!

Remind them that as it is written in the Torah, "And you shall tell your children" (Exodus 13:8) that on Passover we must recount the events of the Exodus from Egypt. This is the central goal of the Seder and the Haggadah. The songs, special foods, and different actions all contribute in telling that story.

End with these words from the Mishnah, which are included in the Haggadah: "In every generation, a person is obligated to see himself as if **he** left Egypt. As it is said, 'And you shall tell your children on that day, this is what G-d did for **me** when I came out of Egypt'" (Mishnah, Pesachim 10:5).



For discussion:

- > At the Seder, what customs and foods remind us of the slavery and the Exodus from Egypt? If they don't know, you can give examples: Salt water reminds us of the tears shed by the Children of Israel, the bitter herbs remind us of the difficulty of the work, the *charoset* reminds us of the mortar, the matzah reminds us of the Exodus from Egypt, and the bone reminds us of the Passover sacrifice that commemorated the exodus to freedom.
- > What is your Seder like?
- > Does your family have any special customs or ways of presenting the story of the Exodus from Egypt?