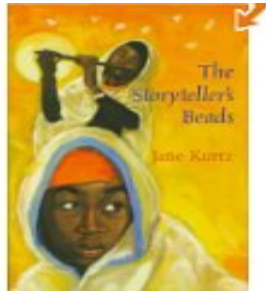




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The Storyteller's Beads
by Jane Kurtz
Book Club for Grades 5-7

The following program outline was developed by the Jewish Education Center of Cleveland for a two-session (1 ¼ hours each) summer book club held at a local book store for students in grades five through seven. The JECC offers this document to others who may wish to adapt it for a book club of similar or greater length, or by a teacher using the book in a classroom setting.

Heather Lenson, Librarian
Nachama Skolnik Moskowitz, Director of Curriculum

Session One

Ask participants to read up to page 38 prior to the first session.

In advance have available:

- Photos of Ethiopian Jewry
- Laptop to show a Google Earth map with the terrain of the escape route (optional)
- A packet for each participant with:
 - Photocopy of the glossary at the back of the book (one per participant; it will be easier for them to look up foreign words with the glossary in their hands)
 - "For Parents: *The Storyteller's Beads*" information sheet (at the end of this packet)
 - "Looking for Something Else to Do?" participant handout (at the end of this packet)

15 minutes	<p>Welcome & Mixer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer a welcome and an overview of the book club • As a way to help participants get to know each other <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Read page 51 where Rahel's grandmother explains the importance of the beads. ○ Give each participant a string and 5 beads. As they create their own necklace, they should think about five things to say about themselves as way of introduction to the others – one thought for each bead. For instance: name, grade level, a fun activity or sport they are involved in, a favorite book, name of their pet, etc. ○ Provide an opportunity for everyone to introduce him or herself. ○ Ask if anyone knows of a modern parallel to storytellers' beads? Some things that people wear to remember stories important to them? [These might be t-shirts from places they visited, or charm bracelets, or "mom's necklaces" with one character or jewel for each child in the family.] Explain that the Storyteller's beads are a core part of this book – the group will return to this idea later. 	<p><i>Perhaps play some Ethiopian music as participants arrive? Consider Shlomo Gronich and the Sheba Choir (do a Google search)</i></p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer general guidelines for helping the book club succeed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Respect everyone and their opinions! ○ Speak up and share your own thoughts! • 	
10 minutes	<p>The context and plot of the story (top of p. 38)</p> <p>Show participants photos of Ethiopian Jews and the country. Use these visuals to help the children talk about the place and time using questions such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do the photographs tell you of the place? How did Sahay and Rahel live, if these were their villages? • What do the children know of Sahay? Fill in as needed. • What do the children know of Rahel? Fill in as needed. • What did the children learn from the book about the situation both girls were living in? • Offer a brief overview of the storyline – including that there are two different girls, both Ethiopians, but with different backgrounds. • Ask if participants have any questions about the story up to this point. 	<p><i>These may be chosen from images.google.com. Do a search for >>> Beta-Israel Ethiopia. Choose photos that depict life in Ethiopia, before travel to Israel.</i></p> <p><i>Another option for this opening activity is to create a list of characteristics of Sahay and Rahel described by page 38. Cut up the list and have the children identify which descriptor belongs to which girl. [This can be a “backpocket” exercise, to supplement the one with the photos.]</i></p>
15 minutes	<p>Girls’ Escape</p> <p>Explain that in the book, there are two separate stories that are intertwined: one of Sahay and one of Rahel. Talk about the beginning of their journeys</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Why did they leave? ○ What fears did they have? ○ If you have access to the internet, share with participants a Google Earth view of Ethiopia. This should be set up in advance, perhaps starting with the location of the book group (in whatever city) and then letting Google Earth “fly” to Gondar, Ethiopia. Zoom in closer to the ground to 	<p><i>This needs to be set up and tried in advance of the session. Use the map in the front of The Storyteller's Beads to locate other areas featured; search for these, too,</i></p>

15 minutes	<p>see the challenges of the trek to the Sudan. Click on some photos embedded in this area, as well. Why would the girls be afraid for the journey?</p> <p>OPTION ONE: Invite an Ethiopian Jew from your community to tell the story of the Jews in Ethiopia (past and more recent) and his/her family's particulars. The goal is to help bring to life the history presented in the book.</p> <p>OPTION TWO: Share with participants the meaning of the words <i>falasha</i> and <i>Beta-Israel</i> (or <i>Beta-Yisrael</i>). Then ask children to turn to the bottom of page 14. Read to them that paragraph and the top two paragraphs on the next page, then have a short discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ What is Sahay afraid of?○ How do you think that she learned this fear? This prejudice?○ Why might the author have put this here in the story? What might happen to Sahay? <p>Explain that Rahel is <i>Beta-Yisrael</i>, a group that was cut off from the Jewish People a long time ago. <i>Beta-Yisrael</i> knows of the Bible (with some twists from our version), but not of later Jewish developments.</p> <p>Have children turn to page 34, at the bottom. Ask for volunteers to read through the paragraph about Jerusalem.</p> <p>If there are at least five minutes left, open a discussion with the children using these questions as guides:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Why did the elders tell the story of the exodus? What were they preparing their people for?○ If you were Rahel, how would you be feeling at this point? Would you be	<p>on <i>Google Earth</i>.</p>
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	<p>excited? Nervous? Afraid?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Why did the author put this part in the story? 	
<p>10 minutes</p>	<p>Snack (Flat bread, chick peas)</p> <p>Optional game: Give each pair of participants a copy of the alphabet sheet (attached at the end of this document) and ask them to find one word from the story that could go with each letter. Share responses by having the first pair give their “A-word,” the second pair sharing their “B-word,” etc. As a group, help a pair with no response for a particular letter.</p> <p>Optional game: Discuss Rahel’s blindness and how difficult it would be for her to travel on this journey of rocky terrain. Blindfold a participant and have another person lead him/her on a path through the curves of the room.</p>	
<p>10 minutes</p>	<p>Conclusion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ask children about their general reactions to the book so far. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What do they find interesting about the book? About the writing? ▪ What do they hope the book answers for them? ○ Explain that by the next time, they should finish the book. Tell them that their parents are being given information about the book and can help explain things about the times or places that are unclear. Suggest that participants note any questions they have about the book – perhaps with a “sticky” on the page, or on a sheet of paper. ○ As they read the rest of the book: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Take a look at the qualities of the girls – their courage, their persistence, and what it means to trust others. ▪ Watch out for Sahay’s prejudices and the parallel of Rahel’s. 	

The Storyteller's Beads

Your challenge? Come up with one word from the story for each letter of the alphabet.

A _____

B Beta-Israel _____

C _____

D _____

E _____

F _____

G _____

H _____

I _____

J _____

K _____

L _____

M _____

N _____

O _____

P _____

Q _____

R _____

S _____

T _____

U _____

V _____

W _____

X _____

Y _____

Z _____

Session Two:

Ask participants to complete the book prior to this session.

10 minutes	<p>Welcome and Introductions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask everyone to share their name and one thing that they really enjoyed doing this past week 	
15 minutes	<p>Discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What questions do group members have about the book or time and place? [Try and see if the children can answer each others' questions, rather than the leaders doing so.] • What of Sahay or Rachel's story were most interesting to the book club members? [Feel free to have them share specific pages, if they have marked them.] • What did the children like about the characters? In what ways were both characters persistent? [The facilitator might need to define this word.] Show courage? 	<p><i>These characteristics may be found on:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • p 75 • pp 85-86, last paragraph • p. 94-95, bottom
10 minutes	<p>Comparison of the Biblical Exodus to Rahel and Sahay's journey</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Have children turn to page 35, at the bottom. Ask for volunteers to read (they will read through the paragraph about Jerusalem). ○ Guide a discussion with these questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Why did the elders tell the story of the exodus? What were they preparing the people for? ○ If you were Rahel, how would you be feeling at this point? Would you be excited? Nervous? Afraid? ○ Why did the author put this part in the story? 	

20 minutes	<p>Prejudice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sahay escapes with her uncle. It's important that the book club members know that she has some fears and even prejudices against the people she calls <i>Falashas</i>, which is what this next part of the session will touch on.• Ask participants:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ What is Sahay afraid of?○ How do you think that she learned this fear? This prejudice?○ Why might the author have put this here in the story? What might happen to Sahay?• Explain that Rahel is <i>Beta-Yisrael</i> (or <i>Beta-Israel</i>) a group that was cut off from the Jewish People a long time ago. <i>Beta-Yisrael</i> knows of the Bible (with some twists from our version), but not of later Jewish developments.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ What do children know of her prejudice?○ Share page 76 (the part where Sahay drank <i>Falasha</i> water – start at the top with “A choking feeling grabbed...” and continue to the start of the last sentence: “Sahay spat on the ground.”)○ Do children know of others with such prejudices? Share a few stories.○ By the end of the story, things had changed for Sahay and Rachel. Ask children to divide into groups of 3-5 and in 3 minutes make as big a list as they can of the things that happened on the journey out of Ethiopia. Share these lists “sing down” style. If one group gives an example, the other group has to cross it off their list.• Discuss with children the difference in connotation of the terms <i>Falashas</i> (derogatory) and <i>Beta-Yisrael</i> (descriptive). How do words sometimes show our prejudices?	
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10 minutes	<p>The Storytellers' Beads</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why is the book called the <i>Storyteller's Beads</i>? • Do a readers' theater with pages 51-52. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If time is short, just do the first two paragraphs on page 51. ○ If you have more time, start there and continue through to page 52, concluding before the last paragraph (with Hirute...the Ethiopian name for the Biblical character, Ruth) • Why did the grandmother feel it was important to give Rahel these beads? • How did the stories sustain Rahel on the journey? • [You may wish to get into some of the specific stories – ones that the children especially liked or had questions about.] 	
10 minutes	<p>Concluding discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From the book, discussion & guest last week, what did they learn about <i>Beta-Yisrael</i>? What questions remain? • What was their favorite part of the book? • Were they happy with the ending to the book? • On a scale of 1-10, how do they rate the book? Why? 	
	<p>Thank group members for coming!!</p>	

OPTIONAL ACTIVITY (to place where you wish): Play "Whose Line is it Anyway?" In turn, have each participant pull from a hat a quote from the story and read it to the group. The other participants must guess who said the quote. [See attached for quotes.]

Whose Line is it Anyway?

"Do not grab a lion by the tail. You know that other Ethiopians have always been afraid of the *Beta-Israel* and our religious beliefs. Fear fills them with hate. Dawit, beware of the danger when you stir the pot of fear and hate."

Rahel's father



"Sahay, I must find a place for you. You are our family's only hope for the future."

Sahay's uncle



"I dreamed we were leaving."

Rahel



"To leave home is always dangerous. But sometimes to stay can be even more dangerous. I have heard that soldiers come into the villages to take young men to fight in the war to the north."

Rahel's grandmother



"It is time. The elders have always said our people came to Ethiopia from the west and someday must go back to the west. The message has come...."

Sahay's father



"But you're coming too. I gave the man your name."

Rahel



"Father, may your walking stick give me some of your strength."

Sahay

"We have no time to run after chickens. I have a little money and two *gabbis* for warmth. Give me the basket of food and see if you can find any more. I'm going to make sure the way of our path is safe. Be ready to leave when I return."

Sahay's uncle



"I heard my mother calling me to the house. But Waldu grabbed my arm, and we hid in the corn. When we heard the first screams in the house, Waldu yelled, 'Come on.' He got up and ran to the house to help. But I...I ran the other way. I ran up into the cave. So I live and they didn't..."

Sahay



"These beads will help you take something even more important. They are a storyteller's beads, and I give them to you for your journey. During the days until you go, I will tell you our stories. Every time you touch a bead, you must remember its story.

Rahel's grandmother



"I see people. They're waiting for us to walk down to them. Some are smiling and others are crying, but their faces look glad to hear your music. I think they're glad to see us coming."

Sahay



"Come. Put her hand on my shoulder. She can walk with me."

Sahay



"Someone in our family must make *aliyah*. It's up to you, now. I'm going to escape again as soon as I can."

Dawit (Rahel's brother)

For Parents: *The Storyteller's Beads*, by Jane Kurtz

In the early 1980s, Jewish agencies and Israel developed a number of secret ways to help Ethiopian Jews (*Beta-Israel*) escape to Israel from refugee camps in the Sudan. The Ethiopian Jews who made *aliyah* to Israel found ways to get word back to *Beta-Israel* villages and in 1984, ten to twelve thousand people left *Beta-Israel* villages to go to the Sudan, with the hope of traveling to Jerusalem.

Those who safely navigated the hazardous journey were placed in refugee camps with deplorable conditions; many others died along the way. With the camps so full, the government of Israel, in partnership with Jewish agencies around the world, escalated efforts to get more Ethiopian Jews out. On November 21, 1984, a massive airlift to Israel began; it was called "Operation Moses." By the time the operation ended, in early January 1985, 8,000 Ethiopian Jews were brought safely to Israel. In the years that followed, further "Operations" were mounted to rescue the remaining tens of thousands of Ethiopian Jews.

The Storyteller's Beads takes place in Ethiopia at this time. Sahay and her uncle are the only surviving family members after a military raid; it should be noted that these characters are not Jewish. Fleeing war, famine, and drought, they set out from their small Kemant village to find safety in a Sudanese refugee camp. Rahel, a blind Jewish girl, and her brother also flee the country as part of a group of *Beta-Israel* planning to secretly make *aliyah* to Jerusalem. As part of the same caravan of refugees, the girls make a long, difficult trek across the mountains. When the men are turned back at the border, Rahel and Sahay are left on their own to finish the journey. They find that their common danger and need for one another allow them to overcome the generations of prejudice that separate Jews (called *falasha* or "alien strangers" by some outsiders) and other religious and ethnic groups in this part of the world.

Once the girls arrive at the Sudanese refugee camp, they face famine and thousands of sick refugees. Rahel overhears that a group of *Beta-Israel* will be rescued by the Israeli government and airlifted to Jerusalem. She convinces Sahay to come onto the airlift with her as her "sister." They arrive safely in Israel. Throughout the perilous journey and the time spent at the refugee camp, Rahel comforts herself and Sahay with the stories that she learned from her grandmother - tales from the Bible and Ethiopian tradition that help the girls believe that they will survive.

THEMES:

There are a number of themes that flow through the book.

- Courage – Rahel and Sahay show tremendous courage throughout the story. When Sahay's village was attacked, she had courage to escape into the hills and hide in a cave. Both girls left their homes to travel on a dangerous journey to an unknown land. When the men they traveled with were sent back at the border, the girls bravely continued the journey by themselves.
- Persistence - A few times in the story, Sahay mentions her stubbornness as a weakness and a strength. Her stubbornness was the persistence that kept her hidden during the military attack that killed her family. Both girls showed persistence

in their determination to cross the rough desert terrain, starving and thirsty, while encountering dangerous conditions and possible attacks.

- Prejudice, and overcoming it – Both girls had cultural prejudices. Sahay called *Beta-Israel*, *falasha* or "alien strangers." Her ethnic group believed Jewish Ethiopians gave "the evil eye." Also, Sahay's tribe believed that the *Beta-Israel* people turned into hyenas and attacked at night. When Sahay's uncle and Rahel's brother, Dawit, were forced to return to Ethiopia, she realized that she and Rahel were in the same situation, alone. She then told Dawit to put Rahel's hand on her shoulder and she would guide her. She overcame her culture's superstition about Ethiopian Jews having an "Evil Eye." Likewise, Rahel had to overcome her prejudices and rely on Sahay to guide her.
- Physical disability, and living with it - Despite her blindness, Rahel was able to spin yarn, make pottery and weave. She had a heightened sense of hearing which enabled her to hear who was coming near her. She could feel her way through the rough terrain.
- Trust and mistrust – Rahel relied on Sahay to guide her safely through the desert. Sahay trusted Rahel to sneak her onto the rescue airlift. After the soldiers sent the men back over the border, both girls learned to distrust the Ethiopian government soldiers. The soldiers tried to tell the girls that life was better in Ethiopia and to return. Instead, the girls hid from the soldiers and continued on their journey.

RESOURCES YOU MAY FIND OF INTEREST:

Adult Books:

- Brooks, Robert and Goldstein, Sam. **Raising Resilient Children: Fostering Strength, Hope, and Optimism in Your Child.** Lincolnwood, IL: Contemporary Books, 2001.
Clinical psychologists, Brooks and Goldstein define and describe resilience the capacity to cope and feel competent. The authors list and examine in-depth 10 guideposts that help parents form the foundation of resilient youth, including being empathetic, communicating effectively, listening actively, and changing "negative scripts." The premise is that parents can't change the world, but they can help their children cope.
- Gorman, Christine et al. **The Importance of RESILIENCE.** *Time* 165(3), 1/17/2005.
A magazine article about parents teaching children resilience.
- Leslau, Wolf and Berman, Colette. **The Jews of Ethiopia: A Pictorial Journey Back to Their Past.** Israel: Amitai Design & Prod., 2001.
Wolf Leslau took photographs of the *Beta-Israel* in Ethiopia from the time period of 1946 to 1970.

- Lyons, Len. **The Ethiopian Jews of Israel : Personal Stories of Life in the Promised Land.** Woodstock, VT: Jewish Lights Pub., 2007.
Recorded conversations with *Beta-Israel* between spring 2004 and winter 2006 organized into eight chapters or themes. The 50 men and women interviewed include soldiers, students, religious leaders, actors, musicians, and a member of the Israeli *Knesset*. There are striking color photographs by Illan Ossendryver and a foreword by Alan Dershowitz.
- Mogel, Wendy L. **The Blessing of a Skinned Knee: Using Jewish Teachings to Raise Self-Reliant Children.** NY: Scribner, 2001.
Digging into the rich traditions of the *Torah*, the *Talmud* and other Jewish teachings, Mogel builds a parenting blueprint that draws on core spiritual values relevant to families. With warmth and humor, she offers strategies for encouraging respect and gratitude in children, and cautions against overprotection in order to build resilience.
- Samuel, Naomi. **The Moon is Bread.** Israel: Gefen, 1999.
A biographical account of the author's Ethiopian husband, Abren Erdani. It tells of his happy childhood in Ethiopia, his difficult journey to Sudan and from there to Israel, and his adjustment to life in Israel.
- Spector, Stephen. **Operation Solomon: The Daring Rescue of the Ethiopian Jews.** Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 2005.
This is the story of Operation Solomon in which Israel rescued 14,000 Jews in less than thirty-six hours. Following the earlier 1984 rescue, Israel learned that the Ethiopian Jewish population was larger than they previously thought. By 1990-91, American activists called on Israel to allow *Beta-Israel* to come to Israel. The Ethiopian government saw its Jews as bargaining chips and did not want to let them go without a large payment of cash from Israel. The author interviewed some of the Israeli, Ethiopian and American officials who were involved.

Films:

- **Falasha: Exile of the Black Jews.** NY: Wellspring Media, 2004. DVD, 80 min.
The story of Ethiopian Jews and the politics that caused the Israeli government to airlift 7,000 Ethiopian Jews out of the Sudan to Israel from Nov. 24, 1984 to Jan. 6, 1985. Produced by Jamie Boyd and Simcha Jacobovici. (For grades 9 - adult).
- **Live and Become** Israel: Menemsha Films, 2009, DVD, 140 mins.
This film centers on the beginning of "Operation Moses" airlift of *Beta-Israel* to Israel. A Christian woman in a Sudanese refugee camp wants a better life for her nine-year-old son in Israel. An Ethiopian Jewish woman, whose son has recently died, agrees to pass the boy off as her own son, but in Israel, the adopted mother dies. He is adopted by a liberal Israeli couple with two children. The wife becomes a fiery defender of the boy against the prejudices he faces as he begins a new life. Written and directed by Ra-du Mihaileanu. (For grades 9 - adult).
- **The Name My Mother Gave Me.** Israel: Ruth Diskin Films, 2009. 56 min., DVD.
A documentary about Ethiopian and Russian Israelis who meet at a leadership program in Israel. The program culminates in a joint journey to Ethiopia. In Israel, the participants are not always readily accepted. However, in Ethiopia, they discover

the universality of their experiences and their shared commitment to Israel. Directed by Eli Tal-EI.

Juvenile Literature:

- Levitin, Sonia. **The Return**. New York: MacMillan Publishing Co., 1987. The first airlift of Ethiopian Jews, called Operation Moses, took place in late 1984 and early 1985 when 8,000 were secretly flown from refuge camps in Sudan to freedom in Israel. This novel about a young Ethiopian girl's harrowing journey to Sudan and ultimate rescue is vividly realized. (For grades 7-12).
- Morgan, Anna. **Daughters of the Ark**. Toronto: Second Story Press, 2005. An adventure story about two girls, separated in time by thousands of years, who are forced to leave their homes on perilous journeys to unknown lands. In 939 BCE Aleesha and her family are sent by caravan from Jerusalem to the court of the Queen of Sheba in Ethiopia. Almost three thousand years later, a *Beta- Israel* girl flees religious persecution and famine to return to Israel, her ancestral home. (For grades 7-12).

Website:

- "Teaching Tolerance: Help your child learn to live and play in a diverse world," by Thomas Moore. <http://www2.scholastic.com/browse/article.jsp?id=694>

Looking for Something Else to Do?

How about trying some projects that mesh with *The Storyteller's Beads*?

Eat!

The recipes are from **Exotic Ethiopian Cooking** (Daniel J. Mesfin, Falls Church, VA: Ethiopian Cookbook Enterprises, 1993).

- On page 21, Rahel listens to her mother making *injera*, a kind of bread. Try making your own!

Yet'ef Injera (a flat Ethiopian bread a thin, sour dough pancake made from a rye like grain called t'ef which is grown in Ethiopia. It is served with all kinds of dishes on any occasion and eaten with hands. It is usually served cold.

- Ingredients:
 - 1 ½ lbs. of t'ef flour (Eragrostis Abyssinica)
 - 6 cups of water
 - 2 pkts. of yeast
- Clean t'ef thoroughly by removing all foreign materials.
- Grind to a fine powder.
- Sift into a deep mixing bowl. Add water gradually and rubbing with your fingers to avoid lumps, make the flour into a dough.
- In a large pot dissolve yeast in warm water and add the flour mixture and mix.
- Leave covered for 2-3 days until fermentation begins and water rises to the top.
- Carefully discard the water.
- Boil 2 cups of water.
- Take 1 cup of the mixture and put in the boiling water.
- Place on a warm stove and stir continuously until it becomes thick.
- Cool and pour back into the original pot.
- Add more water, cover and let stand still till the mixture rises.
- Preheat pancake pan at 420 degrees.
- Take ¾ cup of the mixture and pour into the pan slowing, starting at the edge, going clockwise, in circles and coming to the center.
- Cover pan 2-4 minutes.
- When ready, the rim of the *injera* will rise from the pan.
- Remove immediately and place on a clean cloth to cool.
- *Injera* can be covered and stored in a cool place or refrigerated for about 2-3 days.

This recipe makes 6-8 servings.

- On page 21, Rahel mentions her mother making *wat*, a spicy stew, frequently the main dish of an Ethiopian dinner. It is eaten with injera. **Yekik We't** (Split Pea Sauce) is a vegetarian dish which is prepared with oil and served with injera. It can be served hot or cold.
 - Ingredients: 2 cups split peas (red)
2 cups red onions (chopped)
2 cups oil
4 cups water
1 tsp. ginger
¼ tsp. fenugreek
1 cup red pepper
To taste salt
 - Wash split peas and boil until soft, about 15-20 minutes.
 - Drain water from peas, set them aside, save water.
 - Cook onion and fenugreek until brown and soft, using a little water at a time to prevent burning.
 - Add red pepper and stir.
 - Add 1 ½ cups more of the reserved water.
 - Add oil and salt and stir well.
 - Add cooked split peas.
 - Sprinkle in spices.
 - Add remaining water and cook for 15 minutes.
 - Remove from heat, and serve hot or cold.
 - Store in refrigerator.

This recipe serves 6.

Do!

- A lot of food is mentioned in the book. To get an idea of what Ethiopians eat, as you read keep a food diary of all that Sahay and Rachel mention in the book. How does their diet compare to yours?
- Sahay takes her father's walking stick when she leaves home with her uncle (see page 7). Make one of your own. Take a walk in the woods or a park and find a straight stick that is a good size for you. Leave it natural, or peel the bark off for a smooth look.
- If you have it on your computer, or your parent will allow you to download the program, spend some time on Google Earth (earth.google.com). If you haven't used this before, it will take a while for you to get the hang of the possibilities. It could be helpful to experiment with Google Earth with a parent. Things you can do include:
 - On the top left of the screen there's a place you can list a destination.
 - See what happens when you type in your home city and then *click*.

- Type in Jerusalem, Israel. *Click.* [Ah, you'll "fly" there.]
- Type in Gondor, Ethiopia. *Click*
- Using the three instruments on the top right of the screen (you may need to use your mouse to rest your cursor over it), "fly around" Gondar. Use the map in the front of the book to figure out about where Rahel and Sahay lived. You'll find a few photos embedded in Google Earth; feel free to click on them. Zoom in and try and "fly" a path that takes you west to the Sudan. Note that not all the images in this area of the world are as clear as those in the US, but you'll get the idea. What would it have been like to walk this geographic area at night for 2 months?
- Listen to some Ethiopian music. One interesting option is to look up Shlomo Gronich, an Israel musician who started a choir made up of Ethiopian children and teens, ages 12-17. Go to http://www.israel-music.com/shlomo_gronich/shlomo_gronich_sheba_choir/ and just above the album cover click on, "Listen to album samples."

Learn more!

- The journey out of Ethiopia was quite difficult and the flight on the plane a bit scary for those who hadn't even ridden in cars before getting to the Sudan. One would hope that life in Israel would be wonderful for *Beta-Yisrael*, but it's been difficult. Read about both the success stories and some of the issues.
 - **They Are Our Flesh and Blood.** *Babaganewz.*
<http://www.babaganewz.com/articles/they-are-our-flesh-and-blood/>
This article introduces Yeshaleka and Tesfahun, Ethiopian Jewish teenagers dreaming of *aliyah*. Many obstacles stood in their way as they tried to reach Israel.
 - **On Eagles' Wings: Operation Solomon.**
<http://www.babaganewz.com/articles/on-eagles-wings-operation-solomon/>
The story of Wenda Busena's journey being rescued by Operation Solomon.

Read!

- Read about the author: <http://www.janekurtz.com/books/storytellers.html>
- If you liked *The Storyteller's Beads*, you might also enjoy:
 - Kanefield, Teri. **Rivka's Way**. Chicago: Front Street/Cricket, 2001.
Eager to see what lies beyond the walls of the Prague Ghetto, 15 year old Rivka disguises herself as a boy and ventures outside secretly against her parents wishes. Set in 18th century Prague.

- Roy, Jennifer. **Yellow Star**. Tarrytown, NY: Marshall Cavendish, 2006. Written in free verse and based on the life of Sylvia Perlmutter. In 1939, the Germans invaded the town of Lodz, Poland and moved the Jewish population, including Sylvia and her family, into a ghetto. Almost all of the children were taken to concentration camps. Sylvia's father hid her from the Nazis for six years until the end of the war.
- Thompson, Sarah et al. **Three Cups of Tea: One Man's Journey to Change the World ... One Child at a Time**. NY: Puffin Books, 2009. A young-reader's edition of the *New York Times* best-seller for adults presents an abbreviated, simplified account of Greg Mortenson's life-saving mountain rescue by Pakistani villagers that inspired his life's work: building schools in Pakistan and Afghanistan. Mortenson delivers his message without sounding preachy; he encourages readers to put aside prejudice and politics, and to remember that the majority of people are good.
- Read stories about children from cultures in conflict:
 - Carmi, Daniella. **Samir and Yonaton**. NY: Arthur A. Levine/Scholastic, 2000. A Palestinian boy and a Jewish boy become friends while patients in a hospital. (For grades 5 – 8).
 - Glatshetyn, Yankev. **Emil & Carl**. New Milford, CT Roaring Brook Press 2006. Originally published in *Yiddish* in 1940, this is the story of two boys who both lost their parents after Hitler's take-over of Austria. The story is set in Vienna a few years before World War II starts. It shows a world as Jews are persecuted, rights are taken away and people are cruel. (For grades 5 – 8).
 - Levine, Anna. **Running on Eggs**. 13 Chicago: Front Street/Cricket Books, 1999. Thirteen-year-old Karen is drawn to her track teammate Yasmine, who is an Arab. Both girls dream of winning an upcoming meet to qualify for a competition in Spain. But when Yasmine's father will not allow her to wear the "immodest" uniform of shorts, Yasmine must leave the team. However, she offers to help Karen train for the race. Knowing their friends and family would disapprove, the two meet secretly in an overgrown lot dividing Karen's *kibbutz* from Yasmine's village. Tension mounts when Yasmine's older brother spies the girls together, and Karen, sensing impending danger, is forced to choose where her loyalties lie. (For grades 5 – 8).

- Rahel and Sahay stay in a refugee camp in the Sudan for a while. Many children from the Sudan have also become refugees in recent years. Some books for learning more about those children include:
 - Hecht, Joan. **The Journey of the Lost Boys: A Story of Courage, Faith and the Sheer Determination to Survive by a Group of Young Boys Called "The Lost Boys of Sudan."** Aswell Press, 2005.
"The Lost Boys of Sudan" are thousands of young boys who were separated from their families and forced to walk approximately 1,000 miles to reach safe refuge from war and certain death. This book offers readers a chronological timeline of the epic journey taken by these children, beginning in their rural villages of Southern Sudan and ending with their arrival as young men to the United States. It is narrated through the voice of Joan Hecht, one of their American mentors, whom they lovingly call "mom" or "Mama Joan." "The Journey of the Lost Boys" is a compelling story of courage, faith and the sheer determination to survive by a group of young orphaned boys.
 - Naidoo, Beverly. **Making it Home: Real-Life Stories from Children Forced to Flee.** New York: Puffin, 2005.
Narrators from Kosovo, Bosnia, Afghanistan, Iraq, Congo, Liberia, Sudan, and Burundi reveal the injustices of their lives being forced from their homelands. A short introduction precedes each narrative or set of narratives and gives the history of the country's conflict.
 - Wilkes, Sybella. **One Day We Had to Run!** NY: Millbrook Press, 1995.
First-person narratives of three young refugees whose travels took them from their homelands in Sudan, Somalia, and Ethiopia to the Kakuma refugee camp in Kenya where they were interviewed. Each account is preceded by a couple of pages about the past and present of the narrator's country and a colorful map of the child's journey. The book opens, after a foreword about young refugees, with an explanation of how the author encouraged the camp children to paint and tell their folktales in order to help them talk about their experiences. Then, there is a summary of the worldwide refugee crisis. At the end are pages on Rwanda, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, and Save the Children.
- Prejudice is one of the themes in **The Storyteller's Beads**. To explore that theme further read:
 - Cormier, Robert. **Tunes for Bears to Dance To.** NY: Delacorte Press, 1992.
Numb and lonely after his brother's death, Henry is befriended by a bigoted new employer, who attempts to involve the boy in an act of cruelty against a Holocaust survivor. (For grades 5 – 8).

- Rosen, Sybil. **Speed of Light**. NY: Atheneum, 1999.
Audrey Ina Stern, a Jewish girl living in Blue Gap, VA, in the 1950s, must come to terms with racism and anti-Semitism when her father, a city councilman, supports a black man for an opening in the local police department. Councilman Stern's action triggers a sequence of anti-Semitic events. For Tante, a distant cousin who lives with the Sterns, these events rekindle nightmares of her experiences during the Holocaust. (For grades 5 – 8)

- Schwartz, Ellen. **Stealing Home**. Toronto: Tundra, 2006.
Set in Brooklyn in 1947, this is the story of a mixed race orphan who is sent to live with his Jewish relatives. As Joey yearns for acceptance, especially from his stern grandfather, his struggle is mirrored by that of his favorite baseball player, Jackie Robinson, who stoically endures prejudice on the baseball field. Well written and fast-paced, this has believable characters and a plot with sports appeal as well as sound values. (For grades 5 – 8)